

RANDOM PD ENCYCLOPEDIA - Z

Zut

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Zut and Other Parisians*, by Guy Wetmore Carryl

SIDE by side, on the avenue de la Grande Armée, stand the épicerie of Jean-Baptiste Caille and the salle de coiffure of Hippolyte Sergeot, and between these two there is a great gulf fixed, the which has come to be through the acerbity of Alexandrine Caille (according to Espérance Sergeot), through the duplicity of Espérance Sergeot (according to Alexandrine Caille). But the veritable root of all evil is Zut, and Zut sits smiling in Jean-Baptiste's doorway, and cares naught for anything in the world, save the sunlight and her midday meal.

When Hippolyte found himself in a position to purchase the salle de coiffure, he gave evidence of marked acumen by uniting himself in the holy--and civil--bonds of matrimony with the retiring patron's daughter, whose dot ran into the coveted five figures, and whose heart, said Hippolyte, was as good as her face was pretty, which, even by the unprejudiced, was acknowledged to be forcible commendation. The installation of the new establishment was a nine days' wonder in the quartier. It is a busy thoroughfare at its western end, is the avenue de la Grande Armée, crowded with bicyclists and with a multitude of creatures fearfully and wonderfully clad, who do incomprehensible things in connection with motor-carriages. Also there are big cafés in plenty, whose waiters must be smoothly shaven: and moreover, at the time when Hippolyte came into his own, the porte Maillot station of the Métropolitain had already pushed its entrée and sortie up through the soil, not a hundred metres from his door, where they stood like atrocious yellow tulips, art nouveau, breathing people out and in by thousands. There was no lack of possible custom. The problem was to turn possible into probable, and probable into permanent; and here the seven wits and the ten thousand francs of Espérance came prominently to the fore. She it was who sounded the progressive note, which is half the secret of success.

"Pour attirer les gens," she said, with her arms akimbo, "il faut d'abord les épater."

In her creed all that was worth doing at all was worth doing gloriously. So, under her guidance, Hippolyte journeyed from shop to shop in the faubourg St. Antoine, and spent hours of impassioned argument with carpenters and decorators. In the end, the salle de coiffure was glorified by fresh paint without and within, and by the addition of a long mirror in a gilt frame, and a complicated apparatus of gleaming

nickel-plate, which went by the imposing title of *appareil antiseptique*, and the acquisition of which was duly proclaimed by a special placard that swung at right angles to the door. The shop was rechristened, too, and the black and white sign across its front which formerly bore the simple inscription "Kilbert, Coiffeur," now blazoned abroad the vastly more impressive legend "Salon Malakoff." The window shelves fairly groaned beneath their burden of soaps, toilet waters, and perfumery, a string of bright yellow sponges occupied each corner of the window, and, through the agency of white enamel letters on the pane itself, public attention was drawn to the apparently contradictory facts that English was spoken and "schampoing" given within. Then Hippolyte engaged two assistants, and clad them in white duck jackets, and his wife fabricated a new blouse of blue silk, and seated herself behind the desk with an engaging smile. The enterprise was fairly launched, and experience was not slow in proving the theories of *Espérance* to be well founded. The quartier was *épaté* from the start, and took with enthusiasm the bait held forth. The affairs of the Salon Malakoff prospered prodigiously.

But there is a serpent in every Eden, and in that of the Sergeant this rôle was assumed by Alexandrine Caille. The worthy *épicier* himself was of too torpid a temperament to fall a victim to the gnawing tooth of envy, but in the soul of his wife the launch, and, what was worse, the immediate prosperity of the Salon Malakoff, bred dire resentment. Her own establishment had grown grimy with the passage of time, and the annual profits displayed a constant and disturbing tendency toward complete evaporation, since the coming of the big cafés, and the resultant subversion of custom to the wholesale dealers. This persistent narrowing of the former appreciable gap between purchase and selling price rankled in Alexandrine's mind, but her misguided efforts to maintain the percentage of profit by recourse to inferior qualities only made bad worse, and, even as the Sergeant were steering the Salon Malakoff forth upon the waters of prosperity, there were nightly conferences in the household next door, at which impending ruin presided, and exasperation sounded the keynote of every sentence. The resplendent façade of Hippolyte's establishment, the tide of custom which poured into and out of his door, the loudly expressed admiration of his ability and thrift, which greeted her ears on every side, and, finally, the sight of *Espérance*, fresh, smiling, and prosperous, behind her little counter,—all these were as gall and wormwood to Alexandrine, brooding over her accumulating debts and her decreasing earnings, among her dusty stacks of jars and boxes. Once she had called upon her neighbor, somewhat for courtesy's sake, but more for curiosity's, and since then the agreeable scent of violet and lilac perfumery dwelt always in her memory, and mirages of scrupulously polished nickel and glass hung always before her eyes. The air of her own shop was heavy with the pungent odors of raw vegetables, cheeses, and dried fish, and no brilliance redeemed the sardine and biscuit boxes which surrounded her. Life became a bitter thing to Alexandrine Caille, for if nothing is more gratifying than one's own success, surely nothing is less so than

that of one's neighbor. Moreover, her visit had never been returned, and this again was fuel for her rage.

But the sharpest thorn in her flesh--and even in that of her phlegmatic husband--was the base desertion to the enemy's camp of Abel Flique. In the days when Madame Caille was unmarried, and when her ninety kilos were fifty still, Abel had been youngest commis in the very shop over which she now held sway, and the most devoted suitor in all her train. Even after his prowess in the black days of '71 had won him the attention of the civil authorities, and a grateful municipality had transformed the grocer-soldier into a guardian of law and order, he still hung upon the favor of his heart's first love, and only gave up the struggle when Jean-Baptiste bore off the prize and enthroned her in state as presiding genius of his newly acquired épicerie. Later, an unwittingly kindly prefect had transferred Abel to the seventeenth arrondissement, and so the old friendship was picked up where it had been dropped, and the ruddy-faced agent found it both convenient and agreeable to drop in frequently at Madame Caille's on his way home, and exchange a few words of reminiscence or banter for a box of sardines or a minute package of tea. But, with the deterioration in his old friends' wares, and the almost simultaneous appearance of the Salon Malakoff, his loyalty wavered. Flique sampled the advantages of Hippolyte's establishment, and, being won over thereby, returned again and again. His hearty laugh came to be heard almost daily in the salle de coiffure, and because he was a brave homme and a good customer, who did not stand upon a question of a few sous, but allowed Hippolyte to work his will, and trim and curl and perfume him to his heart's content, there was always a welcome for him, and a smile from Madame Sergeot, and occasionally a little present of brillantine or perfumery, for friendship's sake, and because it is well to have the good-will of the all-powerful police.

From her window Madame Caille observed the comings and goings of Abel with a resentful eye. It was rarely now that he glanced into the épicerie as he passed, and still more rarely that he greeted his former flame with a stiff nod. Once she had hailed him from the doorway, sardines in hand, but he had replied that he was pressed for time, and had passed rapidly on. Then indeed did blackness descend upon the soul of Alexandrine, and in her deepest consciousness she vowed to have revenge. Neither the occasion nor the method was as yet clear to her, but she pursed her lips ominously, and bided her time.

In the existence of Madame Caille there was one emphatic consolation for all misfortunes, the which was none other than Zut, a white angora cat of surpassing beauty and prodigious size. She had come into Alexandrine's possession as a kitten, and, what with much eating and an inherent distaste for exercise, had attained her present proportions and her superb air of unconcern. It was from the latter that she derived her name, the which, in Parisian argot, at once means everything and

nothing, but is chiefly taken to signify complete and magnificent indifference to all things mundane and material: and in the matter of indifference Zut was past-mistress. Even for Madame Caille herself, who fed her with the choicest morsels from her own plate, brushed her fine fur with excessive care, and addressed caressing remarks to her at minute intervals throughout the day, Zut manifested a lack of interest that amounted to contempt. As she basked in the warm sun at the shop door, the round face of her mistress beamed upon her from the little desk, and the voice of her mistress sent fulsome flattery winging toward her on the heavy air. Was she beautiful, *mon Dieu*! In effect, all that one could dream of the most beautiful! And her eyes, of a blue like the heaven, were they not wise and calm? *Mon Dieu*, yes! It was a cat among thousands, a mimi almost divine.

Jean-Baptiste, appealed to for confirmation of these statements, replied that it was so. There was no denying that this was a magnificent beast. And of a chic. And caressing--(which was exaggeration). And of an affection--(which was doubtful). And courageous--(which was wholly untrue.) Mazette, yes! A cat of cats! And was the boy to be the whole afternoon in delivering a cheese, he demanded of her? And Madame Caille would challenge him to ask her that--but it was a good, great beast all the same!--and so bury herself again in her accounts, until her attention was once more drawn to Zut, and fresh flattery poured forth. For all of this Zut cared less than nothing. In the midst of her mistress's sweetest cajolery, she simply closed her sapphire eyes, with an inexpressibly eloquent air of weariness, or turned to the intricacies of her toilet, as who should say: "Continue. I am listening. But it is unimportant."

But long familiarity with her disdain had deprived it of any sting, so far as Alexandrine was concerned. Passive indifference she could suffer. It was only when Zut proceeded to an active manifestation of ingratitude that she inflicted an irremediable wound. Returning from her marketing one morning, Madame Caille discovered her graceless favorite seated complacently in the doorway of the Salon Malakoff, and, in a paroxysm of indignation, bore down upon her, and snatched her to her breast.

"Unhappy one!" she cried, planting herself in full view of *Espérance*, and, while raining the letter of her reproach upon the truant, contriving to apply its spirit wholly to her neighbor. "What hast thou done? Is it that thou desertest me for strangers, who may destroy thee? Name of a name, hast thou no heart? They would steal thee from me--and above all, *_now_*! Well then, no! One shall see if such things are permitted! Vagabond!" And with this parting shot, which passed harmlessly over the head of the offender, and launched itself full at Madame Sergeot, the outraged *épicière* flounced back into her own domain, where, turning, she threatened the empty air with a passionate gesture.

"Vagabond!" she repeated. "Good-for-nothing! Is it not enough to have

robbed me of my friends, that you must steal my child as well? We shall see!"--then, suddenly softening--"Thou art beautiful, and good, and wise. Mon Dieu, if I should lose thee, and above all, _now_!"

Now there existed a marked, if unvoiced, community of feeling between Espérance and her resentful neighbor, for the former's passion for cats was more consuming even than the latter's. She had long cherished the dream of possessing a white angora, and when, that morning, of her own accord, Zut stepped into the Salon Malakoff, she was received with demonstrations even warmer than those to which she had long since become accustomed. And, whether it was the novelty of her surroundings, or merely some unwonted instinct which made her unusually susceptible, her habitual indifference then and there gave place to animation, and her satisfaction was vented in her long, appreciative purr, wherewith it was not once a year that she vouchsafed to gladden her owner's heart. Espérance hastened to prepare a saucer of milk, and, when this was exhausted, added a generous portion of fish, and Zut then made a tour of the shop, rubbing herself against the chair-legs, and receiving the homage of customers and duck-clad assistants alike. Flique, his ruddy face screwed into a mere knot of features, as Hippolyte worked violet hair-tonic into his brittle locks, was moved to satire by the apparition.

"Tiens! It is with the cat as with the clients. All the world forsakes the Caille."

Strangely enough, the wrathful words of Alexandrine, as she snatched her darling from the doorway, awoke in the mind of Espérance her first suspicion of this smouldering resentment. Absorbed in the launching of her husband's affairs, and constantly employed in the making of change and with the keeping of her simple accounts, she had had no time to bestow upon her neighbors, and, even had her attention been free, she could hardly have been expected to deduce the rancor of Madame Caille from the evidence at hand. But even if she had been able to ignore the significance of that furious outburst at her very door, its meaning had not been lost upon the others, and her own half-formed conviction was speedily confirmed.

"What has she?" cried Hippolyte, pausing in the final stage of his operations upon the highly perfumed Flique.

"Do I know?" replied his wife with a shrug. "She thinks I stole her cat--_I!_"

"Quite simply, she hates you," put in Flique. "And why not? She is old, and fat, and her business is taking itself off, like that! You are young and"--with a bow, as he rose--"beautiful, and your affairs march to a marvel. She is jealous, c'est tout! It is a bad character, that."

"But, mon Dieu!"--

"But what does that say to you? Let her go her way, she and her cat. Au r'voir, 'sieurs, 'dame."

And, rattling a couple of sous into the little urn reserved for tips, the policeman took his departure, amid a chorus of "Merci, m'sieu", au r'voir, m'sieu'," from Hippolyte and his duck-clad aids.

But what he had said remained behind. All day Madame Sergeot pondered upon the incident of the morning and Abel Flique's comments thereupon, seeking out some more plausible reason for this hitherto unsuspected enmity than the mere contrast between her material conditions and those of Madame Caille seemed to her to afford. For, to a natural placidity of temperament, which manifested itself in a reluctance to incur the displeasure of any one, had been lately added in Espérance a shrewd commercial instinct, which told her that the fortunes of the Salon Malakoff might readily be imperiled by an unfriendly tongue. In the quartier, gossip spread quickly and took deep root. It was quite imaginably within the power of Madame Caille to circulate such rumors of Sergeot dishonesty as should draw their lately won custom from them and leave but empty chairs and discontent where now all was prosperity and satisfaction.

Suddenly there came to her the memory of that visit which she had never returned. Mon Dieu! and was not that reason enough? She, the youngest patronne in the quartier, to ignore deliberately the friendly call of a neighbor! At least it was not too late to make amends. So, when business lagged a little in the late afternoon, Madame Sergeot slipped from her desk, and, after a furtive touch to her hair, went in next door to pour oil upon the troubled waters.

Madame Caille, throned at her counter, received her visitor with unexampled frigidity.

"Ah, it is you," she said. "You have come to make some purchases, no doubt."

"Eggs, madame," answered her visitor, disconcerted, but tactfully accepting the hint.

"The best quality--or--?" demanded Alexandrine, with the suggestion of a sneer.

"The best, evidently, madame. Six, if you please. Spring weather at last, it would seem."

To this generality the other made no reply. Descending from her stool, she blew sharply into a small paper bag, thereby distending it into a

miniature balloon, and began selecting the eggs from a basket, holding each one to the light, and then dusting it with exaggerated care before placing it in the bag. While she was thus employed Zut advanced from a secluded corner, and, stretching her fore legs slowly to their utmost length, greeted her acquaintance of the morning with a yawn. Finding in the cat an outlet for her embarrassment, Espérance made another effort to give the interview a friendly turn.

"He is beautiful, madame, your matou," she said.

"It is a female," replied Madame Caille, turning abruptly from the basket, "and she does not care for strangers."

This second snub was not calculated to encourage neighborly overtures, but Madame Sergeot had felt herself to be in the wrong, and was not to be so readily repulsed.

"We do not see Monsieur Caille at the Salon Malakoff," she continued. "We should be enchanted"--

"My husband shaves himself," retorted Alexandrine, with renewed dignity.

"But his hair"--ventured Espérance.

"_I_ cut it!" thundered her foe.

Here Madame Sergeot made a false move. She laughed. Then, in confusion, and striving, too late, to retrieve herself--"Pardon, madame," she added, "but it seems droll to me, that. After all, ten sous is a sum so small"--

"All the world, unfortunately," broke in Madame Caille, "has not the wherewithal to buy mirrors, and pay itself frescoes and appareils antiseptiques! The eggs are twenty-four sous--but we do not pride ourselves upon our eggs. Perhaps you had better seek them elsewhere for the future!"

For sole reply Madame Sergeot had recourse to her expressive shrug, and then laying two francs upon the counter, and gathering up the sous which Alexandrine rather hurled at than handed her, she took her way toward the door with all the dignity at her command. But Madame Caille, feeling her snub to have been insufficient, could not let her go without a final thrust.

"Perhaps your husband will be so amiable as to shampoo my cat!" she shouted. "She seems to like your 'Salon'!"

But Espérance, while for concord's sake inclined to tolerate all rudeness to herself, was not prepared to hear Hippolyte insulted, and

so, wheeling at the doorway, flung all her resentment into two words.

"Mal élevée!"

"Gueuse!" screamed Alexandrine from the desk. And so they parted.

Now, even at this stage, an armed truce might still have been preserved, had Zut been content with the evil she had wrought, and not thought it incumbent upon her further to embitter a quarrel that was a very pretty quarrel as it stood. But, whether it was that the milk and fish of the Salon Malakoff lay sweeter upon her memory than any of the familiar dainties of the épicerie Caille, or that, by her unknowable feline instinct, she was irresistibly drawn toward the scent of violet and lilac brillantine, her first visit to the Sargeot was soon repeated, and from this visit other visits grew, until it was almost a daily occurrence for her to saunter slowly into the salle de coiffure, and there receive the food and homage which were rendered as her undisputed due. For, whatever was the bitterness of Espérance toward Madame Caille, no part thereof descended upon Zut. On the contrary, at each visit her heart was more drawn toward the sleek angora, and her desire but strengthened to possess her peer. But white angoras are a luxury, and an expensive one at that, and, however prosperous the Salon Malakoff might be, its proprietors were not as yet in a position to squander eighty francs upon a whim. So, until profits should mount higher, Madame Sargeot was forced to content herself with the voluntary visits of her neighbor's pet.

Madame Caille did not yield her rights of sovereignty without a struggle. On the occasion of Zut's third visit, she descended upon the Salon Malakoff, robed in wrath, and found the adored one contentedly feeding on fish in the very bosom of the family Sargeot. An appalling scene ensued.

"If," she stormed, crimson of countenance, and threatening Espérance with her fist, "if you _must_ entice my cat from her home, at _least_ I will thank you not to give her food. I provide all that is necessary; and, for the rest, how do I know what is in that saucer?"

And she surveyed the duck-clad assistants and the astounded customers with tremendous scorn.

"You others," she added, "I ask you, is it just? These people take my cat, and feed her--_feed_ her--with I know not what! It is overwhelming, unheard of--and, above all, _now_!"

But here the peaceful Hippolyte played trumps.

"It is the privilege of the vulgar," he cried, advancing, razor in hand, "when they are at home, to insult their neighbors, but here--no! My wife

has told me of you and of your sayings. Beware! or I shall arrange your affair for you! Go! you and your cat!"

And, by way of emphasis, he fairly kicked Zut into her astonished owner's arms. He was magnificent, was Hippolyte!

This anecdote, duly elaborated, was poured into the ears of Abel Flique an hour later, and that evening he paid his first visit in many months to Madame Caille. She greeted him effusively, being willing to pardon all the past for the sake of regaining this powerful friend. But the glitter in the agent's eye would have cowed a fiercer spirit than hers.

"You amuse yourself," he said sternly, looking straight at her over the handful of raisins which she tendered him, "by wearying my friends. I counsel you to take care. One does not sell inferior eggs in Paris without hearing of it sooner or later. I know more than I have told, but not more than I can tell, if I choose."

"Our ancient friendship"--faltered Alexandrine, touched in a vulnerable spot.

"--preserves you thus far," added Flique, no less unmoved. "Beware how you abuse it!"

And so the calls of Zut were no longer disturbed.

But the rover spirit is progressive, and thus short visits became long visits, and finally the angora spent whole nights in the Salon Malakoff, where a box and a bit of carpet were provided for her. And one fateful morning the meaning of Madame Caille's significant words "and above all, now!" was made clear.

The prosperity of Hippolyte's establishment had grown apace, so that, on the morning in question, the three chairs were occupied, and yet other customers awaited their turn. The air was laden with violet and lilac. A stout chauffeur, in a leather suit, thickly coated with dust, was undergoing a shampoo at the hands of one of the duck-clad, and, under the skillfully plied razor of the other, the virgin down slid from the lips and chin of a slim and somewhat startled youth, while from a vaporizer Hippolyte played a fine spray of perfumed water upon the ruddy countenance of Abel Flique. It was an eloquent moment, eminently fitted for some dramatic incident, and that dramatic incident Zut supplied. She advanced slowly and with an air of conscious dignity from the corner where was her carpeted box, and in her mouth was a limp something, which, when deposited in the immediate centre of the Salon Malakoff, resolved itself into an angora kitten, as white as snow!

"Epatant!" said Flique, mopping his perfumed chin. And so it was.

There was an immediate investigation of Zut's quarters, which revealed four other kittens, but each of these was marked with black or tan. It was the flower of the flock with which the proud mother had won her public.

"And they are all yours!" cried Flique, when the question of ownership arose. "Mon Dieu, yes! There was such a case not a month ago, in the eighth arrondissement--a concierge of the avenue Hoche who made a contrary claim. But the courts decided against her. They are all yours, Madame Sergeot. My felicitations!"

Now, as we have said, Madame Sergeot was of a placid temperament which sought not strife. But the unprovoked insults of Madame Caille had struck deep, and, after all, she was but human.

So it was that, seated at her little desk, she composed the following masterpiece of satire:

CHÈRE MADAME,--We send you back your cat, and the others--all but one. One kitten was of a pure white, more beautiful even than its mother. As we have long desired a white angora, we keep this one as a souvenir of you. We regret that we do not see the means of accepting the kind offer you were so amiable as to make us. We fear that we shall not find time to shampoo your cat, as we shall be so busy taking care of our own. Monsieur Flique will explain the rest.

We pray you to accept, madame, the assurance of our distinguished consideration,

HIPPOLYTE AND ESPÉRANCE SERGEOT.

* * * * *

It was Abel Flique who conveyed the above epistle, and Zut, and four of Zut's kittens, to Alexandrine Caille, and, when that wrathful person would have rent him with tooth and nail, it was Abel Flique who laid his finger on his lip, and said,--

"Concern yourself with the superior kitten, madame, and I concern myself with the inferior eggs!"

To which Alexandrine made no reply. After Flique had taken his departure, she remained speechless for five consecutive minutes for the first time in the whole of her waking existence, gazing at the spot at her feet where sprawled the white angora, surrounded by her mottled offspring. Even when the first shock of her defeat had passed, she simply heaved a deep sigh, and uttered two words,--

"Oh, _Zut_!"

The which, in Parisian argot, at once means everything and nothing.

GIRAFFES, DEER, CAMELS, ZEBRAS, ASSES, AND HORSES

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *The Animal World, A Book of Natural History*, by Theodore Wood

Here we reach a number of animals with which you have more or less acquaintance, and about which you cannot fail to be interested in hearing any particulars that we may be able to set down for you.

GIRAFFES

These are the tallest of all living animals, for a full-grown male may stand eighteen or even nineteen feet in height. Just think of it! If one elephant were to stand upon another elephant's back a giraffe could look over them both.

This wonderful height is chiefly due to the great length of the neck. Yet there are only seven _vertebræ_, or joints of the spine, in that part of the body, just as there are in our own necks. But then each of these joints may be as much as a foot long! When the animal is hungry, its height is of very great use to it, enabling it to feed upon the leaves of trees which do not throw out branches near the ground. And in captivity, of course, its manger has to be put quite close to the roof of its stable.

Strange to say, the giraffe plucks each leaf separately by means of its tongue, which is very long indeed and very slender, and is prehensile at the tip, like the tail of a spider-monkey. So it can be coiled round the stem of a leaf in order to pull it from the branch. And sometimes at the zoo you may see a giraffe snatch flowers out of ladies' hats and bonnets by means of this curious tongue.

If a giraffe wants to feed upon grass instead of leaves, it straddles its front legs very widely apart, and then bends its long neck down between them. And it does just the same when it drinks.

The giraffe is a fast runner, and a horse must be very swift to overtake it. It runs in a most singular manner, with "a queer camel-like gallop," and throwing out the hind legs with a semicircular movement, while its long neck goes rocking backward and forward like that of a toy donkey,

and the long tail switches up and down as regularly as if it were moved by clockwork. So a long line of giraffes all running away together must look very odd indeed.

You would think that giraffes would be very easily seen, even in the forest, wouldn't you? Yet every hunter tells us that as long as they are standing still it is almost impossible to detect them, since they look just like the stems and foliage of the trees, with the sunlight shining in patches between the leaves!

Giraffes are found in various parts of Africa, south of the Sahara, and two different varieties are known, that from South Africa being much the darker of the two, and having the spots much larger and closer together. A third kind, with five of the so-called horns on the head, has been recorded by Sir Harry Johnston.

THE OKAPI

A still more remarkable discovery, made in the same forest district by the same famous explorer, was that of the okapi, which is a very singular animal. Perhaps we can best describe it to you by saying that it is something like a giraffe, and something like an antelope, and something like a zebra, and something like an ox! The color of its coat is like that of a very red cow, there are zebra-like stripes on the fore and hind quarters, and the legs are cream-colored, while on the skull are faint traces of horns like those of the giraffe.

We do not as yet know much about the habits of this wonderful animal, except that it lives in the thickest parts of the forest, seems to go about in pairs, and to feed wholly on leaves and twigs.

THE DEER

In some ways these animals are not unlike antelopes. But one great difference between the two is this. In the antelopes the horns are hollow, growing upon bony cores which spring from the skull, and remain all through the life of the animal. But in the deer they are solid, and are thrown off every year, fresh ones growing in their places in the course of four or five months. Then the material of which they are made is altogether different, for whereas the horns of the antelopes really consist of highly compressed hair, those of the deer are composed of lime, and are very much more like bone. On account of these differences horns of deer are better called antlers.

The way in which these antlers grow is very curious. For some little time after they are shed the animal is extremely timid, for he knows perfectly well that he has lost his natural weapons. So he hides away in

the thickest parts of the forest, where none of his enemies are likely to find him. After a while, two little knobs make their appearance on the head, just where the horns used to be. These knobs are covered with a close furry skin, which is known as the velvet, and if you were to take hold of them you would find that they were quite hot to the touch. That is because the blood is coursing rapidly through them, and leaving particles of lime behind it as it goes. Day by day they increase in size, throwing out branches as they do so, until they are rather larger than the pair which were cast off. Then the blood-vessels close up, and the velvet becomes dry and begins to fall off, sometimes hanging down in long strips, which are at last rubbed off against the trees and bushes.

REINDEER AND CARIBOU

A great many kinds of deer are found in different parts of the world, perhaps the most famous of all being the reindeer.

This is the only deer in which the does possess horns as well as the stags. It is found in the northern parts of Europe and Asia and also of North America, where it is called the caribou and generally lives in large herds. During the winter and spring these herds remain in the forests. But in summer they are so annoyed by flies that they make their way to the hills, ascending to such a height that their insect enemies cannot follow them, and there they remain until the autumn. A number of herds usually join together when they are migrating in this way, and the appearance of thousands upon thousands of the animals traveling slowly along, each with its antlers uplifted, has been compared to that of a moving forest of leafless trees.

In Siberia, Lapland, and Norway, large herds of reindeer are kept as we keep cattle, and are used as beasts both of draught and burden. A single reindeer can carry a weight of about 130 pounds upon its back, or draw a load of 190 pounds upon a sledge, and it so enduring that it will travel at the rate of from eight to ten miles an hour for twelve hours together.

"The caribou," says Mr. Ingersoll, "has never been utilized by any of the people of arctic America, although just across Bering Strait the same animal was kept in large herds by the Chuckchis of Siberia. The United States government has attempted to repair this deficiency by introducing large numbers of Lapp reindeer among the Alaskans, and the experiment is proving successful." (See also page 173.)

During the summer reindeer can obtain plenty of food, but in the winter they have to live upon a kind of white lichen, which grows in waste, dry places. Very often, of course, this is covered with snow, which the animals have to scrape away with their hoofs. But when a slight thaw is followed by a frost they find it very difficult to do this, and

sometimes they actually perish from starvation.

The color of the reindeer varies slightly at different seasons of the year, the coat usually being sooty brown in summer and brownish gray in winter. The nose, neck, hind quarters, and lower parts of the body are always white or whitish gray.

The people of Lapland, Finland, and Siberia have for a long time domesticated reindeer, finding their flesh good to eat, and their hides, horns, and sinews valuable for making clothing and implements of various kinds. Their milk makes excellent cheese, which in those regions is an important article of food.

THE ELK, OR MOOSE

The elk, which is found in the same parts of the world as the reindeer, is a much larger animal. Indeed, it is the biggest of all living deer, a full-grown stag standing well over six feet in height at the withers, and sometimes weighing as much as twelve hundred pounds. It is not at all a graceful creature, for the neck is very short, and the head is held below the level of the shoulders, while the antlers are so enormously large that it hardly seems possible that the animal should be able to carry them.

One would think that when the elk was traveling through the forest these huge antlers would be constantly getting entangled among the branches of the trees. But the animal is able to throw them well back upon its shoulders, so that they do not really interfere with its progress in the least.

In America this animal is known as the moose, and is generally found in small parties, consisting of a buck, a doe, and their fawns of two seasons. During the summer they live near swamps or rivers, where there is plenty of rich, long grass. But as soon as winter comes on they retire to higher ground and spend the next few months in a small clearing in the midst of the thickest forest. These clearings are generally called moose-yards, and you might think, perhaps, that when a hunter had discovered one he would have no difficulty in shooting the animals. But they are so wary that it is almost impossible to approach them, either by day or by night, and many a hunter has followed them for weeks without obtaining a shot.

The Indians attract the moose within range by imitating the cry of the doe, which they do so cleverly that if a buck is within hearing he is sure to come up to the spot. Or they will rattle a moose's shoulder-bone against the bark of a tree so as to make a sound like the call of the buck, which any buck in the neighborhood is sure to take as a challenge to fight. For these animals are very quarrelsome creatures, and wage

fierce battles with one another, sometimes using their antlers with such effect that both combatants die from their wounds.

The deer family is so large that we must content ourselves with briefly mentioning a few of its members. First we will speak of three of the Old World deer, and of these as they are seen in Great Britain, whose literature has so much to say of them.

[Illustration: THE ANTLERED DEER

1. Virginian, or White-tailed Deer. 2. East Indian Sambar.
3. Moose; European Elk. 4. East Indian Jungle Deer.
5. Roe Deer. 6. Wapiti; American Elk. 7. Caribou Reindeer.

(All are stags)]

THE RED DEER

This is the noblest object of the chase in Europe. The only part of England in which it is now really wild is Exmoor, where it is still quite plentiful. But in many parts of the Scottish Highlands it is carefully preserved, large moorland districts being given up to it under the title of deer forests.

When the female deer has a little fawn to take care of, she generally hides it among very tall heather, pressing it gently with her nose to make it lie down. There it will remain all day long without moving, till she returns to it in the evening. But she is never very far away, and is always ready to come at once to its aid if it should be attacked by a fox or a wildcat.

The stag of this animal is a good deal larger than the doe, and may stand as much as four feet high at the shoulder, while its antlers may be more than three feet long. In color it is a bright reddish brown, which often becomes a good deal paler during the winter.

THE FALLOW DEER

This deer is not nearly so big as the red deer. It is never more than three feet in height, while you can also distinguish it by the fact that the antlers are flattened out at the tip into a broad plate, and that the coat is spotted with white.

This is the deer which is kept in so many English parks, where one may often see a herd of a hundred or more of the pretty, graceful animals moving about together.

There is always a "master" deer in each of these herds, who has won his post by fighting and overcoming all his rivals. He does not always remain with the herd, but often lives apart for weeks together, accompanied, perhaps, by three or four favorite does; and in his absence the herd is led by some of the younger bucks. But whenever he makes his appearance these make way for him, and no one disputes his sway until he becomes too old and infirm to hold his position any longer.

The male fallow deer is known by different names at different times of his life. In the first year he is called a "fawn," in the second year a "pricket," in the third a "sorrel," and in the fourth a "soare," while when he is five years old he is described as a "buck of the first lead," and when he is six as a "buck complete."

THE ROEBUCK

This is quite a small animal, seldom exceeding twenty-six inches in height at the shoulder. In color it is reddish or grayish brown above and grayish white underneath, with a white patch on the chin and another round the root of the tail. The antlers stand nearly upright, and throw off one "tine," or spur, in front, and two more behind.

There is only one part of England where the roebuck is found wild, and that is Blackmoor Vale, in Dorsetshire. But it is common in many of the Scottish moors and forests. It is never seen in herds, like the fallow deer, but goes about in pairs, although when there are fawns they accompany their parents.

The roebuck sheds its antlers in December, and the new ones are fully developed by about the end of February. Although they are seldom more than eight or nine inches long they are really formidable weapons, more especially as the deer is very powerful in proportion to its size. The bucks are very quarrelsome creatures and fight most savagely with one another, while more than once they have been known to attack human beings and to inflict severe wounds before they could be driven away.

AMERICAN DEER

Excepting the moose, caribou, and wapiti, often wrongly called an elk, found in the western United States and some parts of Canada, the deer of North and South America stand quite apart from those of the Old World, and are placed in a genus of their own. Usually the tail is long, and the brow-antler is always wanting. The most familiar species is the common American deer, of which the Virginia or white-tailed deer is the type. This deer is found in varying forms in both continents, and was regularly hunted by the ancient Mexicans with trained pumas.

The well-known Virginia deer found in Eastern North America, and believed to range as far south as Louisiana, stands a trifle over three feet in height, and weighs, clean, about one hundred and seventy-five pounds. The coloration is chestnut in summer, bluish gray in winter. The antlers are of good size, and usually measure from twenty to twenty-four inches in length. As a sporting animal the white-tailed deer is not popular. It has been described as "an exasperating little beast," possessing every quality which a deer ought not to, from the sportsman's point of view. "His haunts are river-bottoms, in choking, blinding bush, and his habits are beastly. No one could ever expect to stalk a white-tail; if you want to get one, you must crawl." Mr. Selous bagged one of these deer somewhat curiously. "He was coming," he writes, "through the scrubby, rather open bush straight toward me in a series of great leaps, rising, I think, quite four feet from the ground at every bound. I stood absolutely still, thinking to fire at him just as he jumped the stream and passed me. However, he came so straight to me that, had he held his course, he must have jumped on to or over me. But when little more than the width of the stream separated us--when he was certainly not more than ten yards from me--he either saw or winded me, and, without a moment's halt, made a prodigious leap sideways. I fired at him when he was in the air, and I believe quite six feet above the ground." The deer, an old buck with a good head, was afterward picked up dead. In different parts of America, as far south as Peru and Bolivia, various local races of this deer are to be found.

THE MULE-DEER

The mule-deer is found in most parts of North America west of the Missouri, as far south as Southern California, stands about three feet four inches at the shoulder, and weighs over two hundred and forty pounds. It carries good antlers, measuring as much as thirty inches, and in color is tawny red in summer, brownish gray in winter. It is a far better sporting animal than the sneaking white-tailed deer, and affords excellent stalking. This deer is still abundant in many localities. It is commonly called "blacktail," but the true blacktail is a similar but smaller species confined to the Northern Pacific coast.

THE WAPITI

This is the largest and finest of American deer, originally numerous everywhere west of the Appalachian Mountains, but now to be found only in the mountains of the Northwest. It is much like the European red deer, but very much larger, and is connected with it by a series of stags, known as the maral, shou, etc., inhabiting Central Asia from Persia to Kamchatka. It grazes like cattle, rather than browses; and in the fall gathers into herds, which formerly contained many thousands and spent the winter among sheltering hills.

MARSH-DEER

In South America are to be found several kinds of marsh-deer, of which the best known has its range from Brazil to the forest country of the Argentine Republic. The marsh-deer is almost equal in size to the red deer of Europe, but somewhat less stout of build; the coloring is bright chestnut in summer, brown in winter; the coat is long and coarse, as befits a swamp-loving creature; the antlers usually display ten points, and measure more than twenty inches.

THE PAMPAS-DEER

This species, closely allied to the marsh-deer, is of small size, standing about two feet six inches at the shoulder. The antlers, usually three-pointed, measure no more than from twelve to fourteen inches in fine specimens. The pampas-deer is found from Brazil to Northern Patagonia.

PERUVIAN AND CHILEAN GUEMALS

These are small deer, found on the high Andes, and are somewhat inferior in size to the Virginia deer. The males carry simple antlers forming a single fork, and measuring about nine inches. The coat, yellowish brown in hue, is coarse, thick, and brittle. The Chilean guemal is found also in most parts of Patagonia; unlike the guemal of Peru, which delights in altitudes of from 14,000 to 16,000 feet, it lives chiefly in deep valleys, thick forest, and even the adjacent plains, to which it resorts in winter.

BROCKETS

Of these, several species are found in South and Central America and Trinidad. They are small deer, having spike-like antlers and tufted crowns. The largest is the red brocket, found in Guiana, Brazil, and Paraguay, which stands twenty-seven inches at the shoulder. The body coloring is brownish red. Like most of the group, this brocket is extremely shy; but although fond of dense covert, it is found also in open patches. The pygmy brocket, a tiny dark-brown deerlet, less than nineteen inches in height, found in Central Brazil, is the smallest of these very small deer.

PUDUS

Two other diminutive deer, known as pudus, closely allied to the brockets, are found in South America. These are the Chilean and Ecuador pudus, of which the former is only about thirteen inches in height, the latter about fourteen or fifteen inches. Little is known of the history and life habits of these charming little creatures, one of which, the Chilean species, has occasionally been seen in zoölogical gardens.

CAMELS

We now come to a remarkably interesting animal. First let us tell you how wonderfully the camel is suited to a life in the desert.

[Illustration: CHILDREN'S PETS AT THE ZOO.

1. Guanaco and Young.
2. Dorcas Gazelle.
3. Bactrian Riding Camel.]

In the first place, it has great spreading feet. Now this is very important, for if the animal had small, hard hoofs, like those of the horse or the donkey, it would sink deeply into the loose sand at every step, and would soon be so tired out that it would be quite unable to travel any farther. But its broad, splay, cushion-like toes do not sink into the sand at all, and it can march easily along, hour after hour, where a horse could scarcely travel a mile.

Then it can go for several weeks with hardly any food. All that it finds as it journeys through the desert is a mouthful or two of dry thorns, and even at the end of the day its master has nothing to give it but a few dates. And on this meager diet it has to travel forty or fifty miles a day with a heavy load on its back.

But then, you must remember, the camel has a hump. Now this hump consists almost entirely of fat, and as the animal marches on day after day with scarcely any food, this fat passes back by degrees into its system, and actually serves as nourishment. So, you see, while the camel is traveling through the desert it really lives chiefly on its own hump! By the time that it reaches its journey's end, the hump has almost entirely disappeared. Little more is left in its place than a loose bag of empty skin. The animal is then unfit for work and has to be allowed to graze for two or three weeks in a rich pasture. Then, day by day, the hump fills out again, and when it is firm and solid once more the camel is fit for another journey.

More wonderful still, perhaps, is its way of carrying enough water about with it to last for several days.

Except the camel, typical ruminating animals, or those which chew the cud, have the stomach divided into four separate compartments, through

which the food passes in turn. These are called the paunch, the honeycomb stomach or bag, the manyplies and the abomasum. In the camel the third of these is wanting, and the first and second are provided with a number of deep cells, which can be opened or closed at the will of the animal.

In these cells the animal is able to store up water. When it has the opportunity of drinking, it not only quenches its thirst, but fills up all these cells as well. In this way it can store up quite a gallon and a half of liquid. Then, when it grows thirsty, and cannot find a pool or a stream, all that it has to do is to open one or two of the cells and allow the contents to flow out, and so on from time to time until the whole supply is exhausted.

In this way a camel can easily go for five or six days without requiring to drink, even when marching under the burning sun of the desert.

Two kinds of camels are known, neither of which is now found in a wild state.

ARABIAN CAMEL

The first of these is the Arabian camel, which only has one hump on its back, and is so well known that there is no need to describe it. It is very largely used in many parts of Africa and Asia as a beast of both draught and burden. Camels for riding upon, however, are generally called dromedaries, and may be regarded as a separate breed, just as hunters are a separate breed from cart-horses. And while they will travel with a rider upon their backs at a pace of eight or nine miles an hour, an ordinary camel with a load upon its back will scarcely cover a third of that distance in the same time.

This camel is a bad-tempered animal. It gets very cross when it is made to kneel down to be loaded, and crosser still when it has to kneel again in the evening for its burden to be removed, and all day it goes grunting and snarling and groaning along, ready to bite any one who may come near it. And it is so stupid that if it wanders off the path for a yard or two, in order to nibble at a tempting patch of herbage, it goes straight on in the new direction, without ever thinking of turning back in order to regain the road.

Besides being used for riding and for carrying loads, the camel is valuable on account of its flesh and also of its milk, while its hair is woven into a kind of coarse cloth.

BACTRIAN CAMEL

This camel, which comes from Central Asia, has two humps on its back instead of one. It is not quite so tall as the Arabian animal, and is more stoutly and strongly built, while its hair is much longer and more shaggy. For these reasons it is very useful in rocky and hilly country, for it can scramble about for hours on steep and stony ground without getting tired, while its thick coat protects it from the cold.

LLAMAS

Llamas may be described as South American camels. But they are much smaller than the true camels, and have no humps on their backs, and their feet are not nearly so broad and cushion-like, while their thick woolly coat grows in dense masses, which sometimes reach almost to the ground.

There are four kinds of llamas, but we can only tell you about one of them, the guanaco.

This animal lives both among the mountains and in the plains. It is generally found in flocks, consisting of a single male and from twelve to fifteen females. But sometimes the flocks are much larger, and more than once several hundred animals have been seen together. The male always keeps behind the flock, and if he notices any sign of danger he utters a curious whistling cry. The does know exactly what this means and at once take to flight, while the male follows, stopping every now and then to look back and see if they are being pursued.

Usually, when two male guanacos meet, they fight, biting one another most savagely, and squealing loudly with rage. When one of these animals is killed, its skin is likely to be found deeply scored by the wounds it has received from its numerous antagonists.

If you go to look at the llamas in a zoo, we would advise you not to stand too near the bars of their enclosure, for they have a habit of spitting straight into one's face! When they are used for riding they will often turn their heads round and spit at their rider, just to show that they are getting tired. And if once they lie down no amount of persuasion or even of beating will make them get up again, until they consider that they have had a proper rest!

ZEBRAS

There are three different kinds of these beautiful animals. The largest and finest is known as Grévy's zebra, which is found in the mountains of Somaliland. It has many more stripes than the other two, while the ground color is quite white. The smallest is the mountain zebra, which is only about as big as a good-sized pony, and has its legs striped

right down to the hoofs. This is now a very scarce animal, being only found in one or two mountainous districts in South Africa, where no one is allowed to interfere with it. And between the two is the Burchell's zebra, which is about as large as a small horse, and has its legs white, with only a very few markings. This animal is quite common in many parts of the South African plains, and has often been domesticated, and taught to draw carriages and carts. Indeed, in some districts of Southern Africa, a coach drawn by a team of zebras instead of horses is not a very uncommon sight.

You would think that an animal, colored like the zebra would be very easily seen, even by night, wouldn't you? But strange to say, these creatures are almost invisible from a distance of even a few yards. Indeed, hunters say that they have often been so close to a zebra at night that they could hear him breathing, yet have been quite unable to see him!

This seems to be due to his stripes, for it has been found that while a pony can be easily seen from forty or fifty yards away on a moonlight night, it at once becomes invisible if it is clothed with ribbons in such a way as to resemble the stripes of the zebra!

Zebras are generally found in herds, and they have a curious habit of traveling about in company with a number of brindled gnus and ostriches, which all seem to be as friendly as possible together.

THE QUAGGA

The quagga, which became extinct some time ago, never had a very extended range, but once it existed in great numbers on all the upland plains of Cape Colony to the west of the Kei River, and in the open treeless country lying between the Orange and Vaal rivers. North of the Vaal it appears to have been unknown.

The quagga seems to have been nearly allied to Burchell's zebra--especially to the most southerly form of that species--but was much darker in general color. Instead of being striped over the whole body, it was only strongly banded on the head and neck, the dark brown stripes becoming fainter on the shoulders and dying away in spots and blotches. On the other hand, in size and build, in the appearance of its mane, ears, and tail, and in general habits, it seems to have nearly resembled its handsomer relative. The barking neigh "qua-ha-ha, qua-ha-ha" seems, too, to have been the same in both species. The Dutch word quagga is pronounced in South Africa "qua-ha" and is of Hottentot origin, an imitation of the animal's neighing call. To-day Burchell's zebras are invariably called qua-has by both Boers and British colonists.

WILD ASSES

The true asses are without stripes on the head, neck, and body, with the exception of a dark streak down the back from the mane to the tail, which is present in all members of the group, and in some cases a dark band across the shoulders and irregular markings on the legs.

In Africa the wild ass is only found in the desert regions of the northeastern portion of that continent. It is a fine animal, standing between thirteen and fourteen hands at the shoulder. It lives in small herds or families of four or five individuals, and is not found in mountainous districts, but frequents low stony hills and arid desert wastes. It is as a general rule an alert animal and difficult to approach, and so fleet and enduring that excepting in the case of foals and mares heavy in young, it cannot be overtaken even by a well-mounted horseman. Notwithstanding the scanty nature of the herbage in the districts they frequent, these desert-bred asses are always in good condition. They travel long distances to water at night, but appear to require to drink regularly. Their flesh is eaten by the natives of the Soudan. The bray of the African wild ass, it is said, cannot easily be distinguished from that of the domesticated animal, which is undoubtedly descended from this breed.

In Asia three varieties of the wild ass are found, which were formerly believed to represent three distinct species; but all the local races of the Asiatic wild ass are now considered to belong to one species, and it is to them that reference is made in the description on pages 196 and 197.

These wild asses have a wide range, and are met with from Syria to Persia and Western India, and northward throughout the more arid portions of Central Asia. Like their African relatives, the wild asses of Asia are inhabitants of waste places, frequenting desert plains and wind-swept steppes. They are said to be as fleet and enduring as the others.

The wild asses of the desert plains of India and Persia are said to be very wary and difficult to approach, but the kiang of Tibet is always spoken of as a much more confiding animal, its curiosity being so great that it will frequently approach to within a short distance of any unfamiliar object, such as a sportsman, engaged in stalking other game.

Asiatic wild asses usually live in small families of four or five, but sometimes congregate in herds. Their food consists of various grasses in the low-lying portions of their range, but of woody plants on the high plateaus, where little else is to be obtained. Of wild asses in general the late Sir Samuel Baker once said: "Those who have seen donkeys only in their civilized state can have no conception of the wild or original

animal; it is the perfection of activity and courage."

THE HORSE

Like the wild camels, genuine wild horses are very generally believed to be extinct. The vast herds which occur to-day in a wild state in Europe, America, and Australia are to be regarded, say those who believe in the extinction theory, as descended from domesticated animals which have run wild. So far as the American and Australian horses are concerned, this is no doubt true; but of the European stocks it is by no means so certain. However, without giving you any theory of our own, we will quote at some length from an interesting and instructive chapter on the horse by A. B. Buckley.

"There rose before my mind the level grass-covered pampas of South America, where wild horses share the boundless plains with troops of the rhea, or American ostrich, and wander, each horse with as many mares as he can collect, in companies of hundreds or even thousands in a troop. These horses are now truly wild, and live freely from youth to age, unless they are unfortunate enough to be caught in the more inhabited regions by the lasso of the hunter. In the broad pampas, the home of herds of wild cattle, they dread nothing. There, as they roam with one bold stallion as their leader, even beasts of prey hesitate to approach them, for, when they form into a dense mass with the mothers and young in their center, their heels deal blows which even the fierce jaguar does not care to encounter, and they trample their enemy to death in a very short time. Yet these are not the original wild horses; they are the descendants of tame animals, brought from Europe by the Spaniards to Buenos Aires in 1535, whose descendants have regained their freedom on the boundless pampas and prairies.

"As I was picturing them careering over the plains, another scene presented itself and took their place. Now I no longer saw around me tall pampas-grass with the long necks of the rheas appearing above it, for I was on the edge of a dreary, scantily covered plain between the Aral Sea and the Balkash Lake in Tartary. To the south lies a barren sandy desert, to the north the fertile plains of the Kirghiz steppes, where the Tartar feeds his flocks, and herds of antelopes gallop over the fresh green pasture; and between these is a kind of no-man's land, where low scanty shrubs and stunted grass seem to promise but a poor feeding-ground.

"Yet here the small long-legged but powerful tarpans, the wild horses of the treeless plains of Russia and Tartary, were picking their morning meal. Sturdy wicked little fellows they are, with their shaggy light-brown coats, short wiry manes, erect ears, and fiery watchful eyes. They might well be supposed to be true wild horses, whose ancestors had never been tamed by man; and yet it is more probable that

even they escaped in early times from the Tartars, and have held their own ever since, over the grassy steppes of Russia and on the confines of the plains of Tartary. Sometimes they live almost alone, especially on the barren wastes where they have been seen in winter, scraping the snow off the herbage. At other times, as in the south of Russia, where they wander between the Dnieper and the Don, they gather in vast herds and live a free life, not fearing even the wolves, which they beat to the ground with their hoofs. From one green oasis to another they travel over miles of ground.

'A thousand horse--and none to ride!
With flowing tail and flying mane,
Wide nostrils--never stretched by pain,
Mouths bloodless to the bit or rein,
And feet that iron never shod,
And flanks unscarred by spur or rod,
A thousand horse, the wild, the free,
Like waves that follow o'er the sea.'[A]

[A] Byron's "Mazeppa."

"As I followed them in their course I fancied I saw troops of yet another animal of the horse tribe, the kulan, or *Equus hemionus*, which is a kind of half horse, half ass, living on the Kirghiz steppes of Tartary and spreading far beyond the range of the tarpan into Tibet. Here at last we have a truly wild animal, never probably brought into subjection by man. The number of names he possesses shows how widely he has spread. The Tartars call him kulan, the Tibetans kiang, while the Mongolians give him the unpronounceable name of dschiggetai. He will not submit to any of them, but if caught and confined soon breaks away again to his old life, a 'free and fetterless creature.'

[Illustration: WILD RELATIVES OF THE HORSE.

1. Northern or Grévy's Zebra. 2. Abyssinian Ass.
3. Southern (or Burchell's) Zebra. 4. Przewalsky's Central-Asian Horse.]

"No one has ever yet settled the question whether he is a horse or an ass, probably because he represents an animal truly between the two. His head is graceful, his body light, his legs slender and fleet, yet his ears are long and ass-like; he has narrow hoofs, and a tail with a tuft at the end like all the ass tribe; his color is a yellow brown, and he has a short dark mane and a long dark stripe down his back as a donkey has. Living often on the high plateaus, sometimes as much as fifteen hundred feet above the sea, this 'child of the steppes' travels in large companies even as far as the rich meadows of Central Asia; in summer wandering in green pastures, and in winter seeking the hunger-steppes where sturdy plants grow. And when Autumn comes the young steeds go off alone to the mountain heights to survey the country around and call

wildly for mates, whom, when found, they will keep close to them through all the next year, even though they mingle with thousands of others.

"Till recent years the *Equus hemionus* was the only truly wild horse known, but in the winter of 1879-80 the Russian traveler Przhevalsky brought back from Central Asia a much more horse-like animal, called by the Tartars kertag, and by the Mongols statur. It is a clumsy, thick-set, whitish-gray creature with strong legs and a large, heavy, reddish-colored head; its legs have a red tint down to the knees, beyond which they are blackish down to the hoofs. But the ears are small, and it has the broad hoofs of the true horse, and warts on the hind legs, which no animal of the ass tribe has. This horse, like the kiang, travels in small troops of from five to fifteen, led through the wildest parts of the Dsungarian desert, between the Altai and Tian-Shan Mountains, by an old stallion. They are extremely shy, and see, hear, and smell very quickly, so that they are off like lightning whenever anything approaches them.

"So having traveled over America, Europe, and Asia, was my quest ended? No; for from the dreary Asiatic deserts my thoughts wandered to a far warmer and more fertile land, where between the Blue Nile and the Red Sea rise the lofty highlands of Abyssinia, among which the African wild ass, the probable ancestor of our donkeys, feeds in troops on the rich grasses of the slopes, and then onward to the bank of a river in Central Africa where on the edge of a forest, with rich pastures beyond, elephants and rhinoceroses, antelopes and buffaloes, lions and hyenas, creep down in the cool of the evening to slake their thirst in the flowing stream. There I saw the herds of zebras in all their striped beauty coming down from the mountain regions to the north, and mingling with the darker-colored but graceful quaggas from the southern plains, and I half grieved at the thought how these untamed and free rovers are being slowly but surely surrounded by man closing in upon them on every side.

"I might now have traveled still farther in search of the onager, or wild ass of the Asiatic and Indian deserts, but at this point a more interesting and far wider question presented itself, as I flung myself down on the moor to ponder over the early history of all these tribes.

"Where have they all come from? Where shall we look for the =first= ancestors of these wild and graceful animals? For the answer to this question I had to travel back to America, to those Western United States where Professor Marsh has made such grand discoveries in horse history. For there, in the very country where horses were supposed never to have been before the Spaniards brought them a few centuries ago, we have now found the true birthplace of the equine race.

"Come back with me to a time so remote that we cannot measure it even by hundred of thousands of years, and let us visit the territories of Utah

and Wyoming. Those highlands were very different then from what they are now. Just risen out of the seas of the Cretaceous Period, they were then clothed with dense forests of palms, tree-ferns, and screw-pines, magnolias and laurels, interspersed with wide-spreading lakes, on the margins of which strange and curious animals fed and flourished. There were large beasts with teeth like the tapir and the bear, and feet like the elephant; and others far more dangerous, half bear, half hyena, prowling around to attack the clumsy paleotherium or the anoplotherium, something between a rhinoceros and a horse, which grazed by the waterside, while graceful antelopes fed on the rich grass. And among these were some little animals no bigger than foxes, with four toes and a splint for the fifth, on their front feet, and three toes on the hind ones.

"These clumsy little animals, whose bones have been found in the rocks of Utah and Wyoming, have been called *Eohippus*, or horse of the dawn, by naturalists. They were animals with real toes, yet their bones and teeth show that they belonged to the horse tribe, and already the fifth toe common to most other toed animals was beginning to disappear.

"This was in the Eocene Period, and before it passed away with its screw-pines and tree-ferns, another rather larger animal, called *Orohippus*, had taken the place of the small one, and he had only four toes on his front feet. The splint had disappeared, and as time went on still other animals followed, always with fewer toes, while they gained slender fleet legs, together with an increase in size and in gracefulness. First one as large as a sheep (*Mesohippus*) had only three toes and a splint. Then the splint again disappeared, and one large and two dwindling toes only remained, till finally these two became mere splints, leaving one large toe or hoof with almost imperceptible splints, which may be seen on the fetlock of a horse's skeleton.

"You must notice that a horse's foot really begins at the point which we call his knee in the front legs, and at his hock in his hind legs. His true knee and elbow are close up to the body. What we call his foot or hoof is really the end of the strong, broad, middle toe covered with a hoof, and farther up his foot we can feel two small splints, which are remains of two other toes.

"Meanwhile, during these long succeeding ages while the foot was lengthening out into a slender limb, the animals became larger, more powerful, and more swift, the neck and head became longer and more graceful, the brain-case larger in front, and the teeth decreased in number, so that there is now a large gap between the biting teeth and the grinding teeth of a horse. Their slender limbs too became more flexible and fit for running and galloping, till we find the whole skeleton the same in shape, though not in size, as in our own horses and asses now.

"They did not, however, during all this time remain confined to America, for, from the time when they arrived at an animal called _Miohippus_, or lesser horse, which came after _Mesohippus_ and had only three toes on each foot, we find their remains in Europe, where they lived in company with the giraffes, opossums, and monkeys which roamed over these parts in those ancient times. Then a little later we find them in Africa and India; so that the horse tribe, represented by creatures about as large as donkeys, had spread far and wide over the world.

"And now, curiously enough, they began to forsake, or to die out in, the land of their birth. Why they did so we do not know; but while in the old world as asses, quaggas, and zebras, and probably horses, they flourished in Asia, Europe, and Africa, they certainly died out in America, so that ages afterward, when that land was discovered, no animal of the horse tribe was found in it.

"And the true horse, where did he arise? Born and bred probably in Central Asia from some animal like the kulan, or the kertag, he proved too useful to savage tribes to be allowed his freedom, and it is doubtful whether in any part of the world he escaped subjection. In England he probably roamed as a wild animal till the savages, who fed upon him, learned in time to put him to work; and when the Romans came they found the Britons with fine and well-trained horses.

"Yet though tamed and made to know his master, he has, as we have seen, broken loose again in almost all parts of the world--in America on the prairies and pampas, in Europe and Asia on the steppes, and in Australia in the bush. And even in Great Britain, where so few patches of uncultivated land still remain, the young colts of Dartmoor, Exmoor, and Shetland, though born of domesticated mothers, seem to assert their descent from wild and free ancestors as they throw out their heels and toss up their heads with a shrill neigh, and fly against the wind with streaming manes and outstretched tails as the kulan, the tarpan, and the zebra do in the wild desert or grassy plain."

[Z] ROOTS.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *The Complete Herbal*, by Nicholas Culpeper

[Transcriber's Note: As with any medicinal work first published in the 1600s and rewritten countless times, it should go without saying to not attempt these recipes. Just in case, the transcriber has now said it. Also, many and varied were the printing and publishing anomalies, for a more complete explanation, see the extensive notes collected at the end of this text.]

Zedoariæ. Of Zedoary, or Setwall. This and _Zurumbet_, according to _Rhasis_, and _Mesue_, are all one; _Avicenna_ thinks them different: I hold with _Mesue_; indeed they differ in form, for the one is long, the other round; they are both hot and dry in the second degree, expel wind, resist poison, stop fluxes, and the menses, stay vomiting, help the cholic, and kill worms; you may take half a dram at a time.

Example:

Expel Wind. Smallage, Parsly, Fennel, Water-flag, Garlick, Costus, Galanga, Hog's Fennel, Zedoary, Spikenard Indian, and Celtic, &c.

Zingiberis. Of Ginger. Helps digestion, warms the stomach, clears the sight, and is profitable for old men: heats the joints, and therefore is profitable against the gout, expels wind; it is hot and dry in the second degree.

Z entries from The Project Gutenberg EBook of *The Fundamentals of Bacteriology*, by Charles Bradfield Morrey

[Discoveries]

1860. Zenker, Trichinosis, _Trichinella spiralis_.

ZOOGLEÆ, firm gelatinous masses of bacteria, one of the most typical examples of which is the _Streptococcus mesenterioides_ of sugar vats. (_Leuconostoc mesenterioides_), the bacterial chains being surrounded by an enormously thickened, firm covering inside of which there may be one or many groups of the bacteria.

Tribe III--ZOPFEÆ Committee of 1919; Gram +, no pigment, non-carbohydrate-fermenting.

Genus 4. _Zopfius_ Wenner and Rettger, 1919.

Type species, _Zopfius zopfii_ (Kurth) Wenner and Rettger.

=Staining of "Acid-fast" Bacilli.=--_Mycobacterium tuberculosis,
Mycobacterium of Johne's disease, "grass" and "butter bacilli,"
Mycobacterium lepræ, Mycobacterium smegmatis._

Gabbet's method:

1. Prepare the film as usual.
2. Stain with carbol-fuchsin as given above for spores.
3. Wash with tap water.
4. Decolorize and stain at the same time with Gabbet's blue, two or three minutes.
5. Wash, dry and examine.

The sulphuric acid in Gabbet's blue removes the carbol-fuchsin from everything except the "acid-fast" bacteria, which remain red, and the blue stains the decolorized bacteria and nuclei of any tissue cells present.

Ziehl-Neelson method:

- 1, 2, 3, as in Gabbet's method.
4. Decolorize with 10 per cent. HCl until washing with water shows only a faint pink color left on slide.
5. Wash thoroughly.
6. Stain with Löffler's blue one or two minutes.
7. Wash, dry and examine.

The results are the same as with Gabbet's method.

Entries from The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Bacteria*, by George Newman

Ziehl-Neelsen Method. Here the primary stain is a solution of carbol-fuchsin:

Fuchsin	1 part
Absolute alcohol	10 parts

5 per cent. aqueous solution of carbolic acid 100 parts

It is best to heat the dye in a sand-bath, in order to distribute the heat evenly. The various stages in the staining process are as follows: (_a_) The cover-glass with the dried film upon it is immersed in the hot stain for one to three minutes. (_b_) Remove the cover-glass from the carbol-fuchsin, and place it in a capsule containing a 25 per cent. solution of sulphuric acid to decolourise it. Here its redness is changed into a slate-grey colour. (_c_) Wash in water, and alternately in the acid and water, until it is of a faint pink colour. (_d_) Now place the cover-glass for a minute or two in a saturated aqueous solution of methylene-blue, which will counter-stain the decolourised ground substance blue. (_e_) Wash in water. (_f_) Dehydrate by rinsing in methylated spirit, dry, and mount. A pure culture of bacteria will not necessarily require the counter-stain (methylene-blue). Sections of tissue may require twenty to thirty minutes in the primary stain (carbol-fuchsin). This stain is used for tubercle and leprosy. With a little practice the staining of the bacillus of tubercle when present in pus or sputum becomes a very simple and accurate method of diagnosis. A small particle of sputum or pus is placed between two clean cover-glasses and thus pressed between the thumb and finger into a thin film. This is readily dried and stained as above, the bacillus of tubercle appearing as a delicately-beaded red rod with a background of blue.

Methods of Examination of Milk:

1. Preparation of Microscopic Slides. This course might at once occur to the mind as the first to adopt in searching for bacteria in milk. Devices have accordingly been proposed for saponification previous to staining. Some recommend the addition of a few drops of a solution of sodium carbonate; others use methylene blue and chloroform. But, whatever plan of staining is adopted, this method of examination in its simplest form is in no degree a criterion of the bacterial content of a large quantity of milk.

Hence it has come to be recognised that one of two manipulations must precede such microscopic examination. These simple processes are known by the terms of sedimentation and centrifugalisation. Sedimentation means merely placing the milk in conical glasses in a cool place for twenty-four hours. The introduction of improved forms of the centrifuge has brought the second method of securing a sediment into preference. Five cubic centimetres of the milk are introduced into the graduated bottle, which is then placed in the centrifuge, and whirled for one or two minutes. Thus a deposit of particulate matter is ensured. Cover-glass specimens of the sediment or deposit are then prepared and stained in the ordinary way.

In testing for tubercle something more is generally necessary. To the

50 cc. of the milk set aside for sedimentation 10 cc. of liquefied, colourless carbolic acid are added. The mixture is shaken and poured into the conical glass. After standing for twenty-four hours a little of the sediment is taken by means of a pipette and examined by ordinary methods, though after "fixing" the films with heat they are some times passed through equal parts of alcohol and ether. The stain is of course that usually adopted in tubercle, namely, the Ziehl-Neelsen. Scheurlen suggested a method for demonstrating the tubercle bacillus in milk by steeping the cover glasses first in alcohol and then ether, after which they were stained with Ziehl-Neelsen.

Entry from Project Gutenberg's *Alchemy: Ancient and Modern*, by H. Stanley Redgrove

=31.= One of the earliest of the alchemists of whom record remains was =Zosimus of Panopolis=, who flourished in the fifth century, and was regarded by the later alchemists as a master of the Art. He is said to have written many treatises dealing with Alchemy, but only fragments remain. Of these fragments, Professor Venable says: "... they give us a good idea of the learning of the man and of his times. They contain descriptions of apparatus, of furnaces, studies of minerals, of alloys, of glass making, of mineral waters, and much that is mystical, besides a good deal referring to the transmutation of metals." [43] Zosimus is said to have been the author of the saying, "like begets like," but whether all the fragments ascribed to him were really his work is doubtful.

[43] F. P. VENABLE, Ph.D.: *_A Short History of Chemistry_* (1896), p. 13.

Among other early alchemists we may mention also =Africanus=, the Syrian; =Synesius=, Bishop of Ptolemais, and the historian, =Olympiodorus= of Thebes.

Z entries from the Project Gutenberg EBook of *The Nuttall Encyclopaedia* by Edited by Rev. James Wood

ZAANDAM or SAARDAM (15), a town in North Holland, 5 m. NW. of Amsterdam; intersected with a network of canals, with various manufactures, including shipbuilding, and a considerable trade; it was here Peter the Great wrought as a ship carpenter in 1699, and the house is still preserved in which he lived, with a stone tablet inscribed

"Petro Magno Alexievitch."

ZABISM. See SABIANISM.

ZACATE`CAS (40), a town of Mexico, capital of an inland province of the same name (452), 440 m. NW. of Mexico City; a great silver-mining centre, an industry which employs over 10,000 of the inhabitants; it is in a valley over 6000 ft. above the sea-level, and has several fine churches, a college, a mint, &c.

ZACHARIAS, Pope from 741 to 752; succeeded Gregory III.; set aside the Merovingian dynasty and sanctioned the elevation of Pepin the Short to the throne of France, in return for which Pepin twice over saved Rome from the Lombards.

ZACOCIA, a king of Mozambique who, according to the LUSIAD (q. v.), received Vasco da Gama with welcome, believing him to be a Mohammedan, but conceived feelings of bitterest hatred to him when he discovered he was a Christian, and tried, but all in vain, to allure him to his ruin; the agent he employed to compass it failing, in his despair he took away his own life.

ZADIG, name of a famous novel by Voltaire, of a philosophical cast, bearing upon life as in the hands of a destiny beyond our control.

ZADKIEL, according to the Rabbins, the name of the angel of the planet Jupiter; also pseudonym assumed by Richard James Morrison, a naval officer, believer in astrology, and the compiler of an astrological almanac.

ZAGAZIG (35), a town in the Delta of Egypt, 50 m. NE. of Cairo; a railway centre, and entrepôt for the cotton and grain grown in the section of the delta round it, and once a centre of worship, and the site of two temples; Tel-el-Kebir (q. v.) lies E. of it.

ZAHN, THEODOR, biblical scholar, born in Rhenish Prussia, professor of Theology at Erlangen; distinguished for his eminent scholarship in connection with the matter especially of the New Testament canon; _b_. 1838.

ZÄHRINGEN, a village 2 m. N. of Freiburg, in Baden, with a castle now in ruins which gives name to the reigning grand-ducal family of Baden, the founders of which were counts of Breisgau.

ZAIRE, name for the CONGO (q. v.) in part of its lower course.

ZAKKUM, a tree, according to Moslem belief, growing in hell, and of the bitter fruit of which the damned are compelled to eat so as to intensify their torment.

ZALEUCUS, law-giver of the ancient Locrians, a Greek people settled in Lower Italy, and who flourished in 700th century B.C.; had a supreme respect for law, and was severe in the enforcement of it; punished adultery with the forfeiture of sight; refused to exonerate his own son who had been guilty of the offence, but submitted to the loss of one of his own eyes instead of exacting the full penalty of the culprit; had established a law forbidding any one to enter the Senate-house armed; did so himself on one occasion in a sudden emergency, was reminded of the law, and straightway fell upon his sword as a sacrifice to the sovereignty of the claims of social order.

ZAMA, a fortified city of ancient Numidea, 100 m. SW. of Carthage, where HANNIBAL (q. v.) was defeated by Scipio Africanus, and the SECOND PUNIC WAR (q. v.) brought to an end, and the fate of Carthage virtually sealed.

ZAMBESI, one of the four great African rivers, and the fourth largest as regards both the volume of its waters and the area it drains, the other three being the Nile, the Congo, and the Niger; its head-streams being the Lungebungo, the Leeba, and Leeambye; it waters a rich pastoral region, and it falls into the Indian Ocean after a course of nearly 1600 m., in which it drains 600,000 sq. m. of territory, or an area three times larger than that of France; owing to cataracts and rapids it is only navigable in different stretches; at 900 m. from its mouth it plunges in a cataract known as the Victoria Falls, and which rivals in grandeur those even of Niagara.

ZAMBESIA, a territory on the Zambesi, under British protection, and in the hands of the British South Africa Company, embracing Mashonaland, Matabeleland, and the country of Khama.

ZAMORA (15), ancient town of Spain, on the right bank of the Douro, 150 m. NW. of Madrid; now in a decayed state; was a flourishing place in Moorish times; contains interesting ruins; manufactures linens and woollens, and trades in wine and fruits.

ZANGWILL, ISRAEL, littérateur, born in London, of Jewish parents in poor circumstances; practically self-taught; studied at London University, where he took his degree with triple honours; became a teacher, then a journalist; has written novels, essays, and poems; among his works the "Bachelor's Club," "Old Maid's Club," "Children of the Ghetto," "Dreams of the Ghetto," "The Master," "Without Prejudice," &c.; _b_. 1854.

ZANGWILL, LOUIS, man of letters, brother of preceding; self-taught; has written several works under the pseudonym of ZZ; distinguished himself at one time as a chess-player; _b_. 1869.

ZANTE (15), one of the Ionian Islands, 9 m. off the NW. coast of the Morea, is 24 m. long and 12 broad; raises currants, the produce of a dwarf vine, and exports large quantities annually. Zante (14), the capital, on a bay on the E. coast, is a clean and prosperous town, most so of any in the group of islands.

ZANZIBAR, a kingdom of East Africa, under British protection, consisting of the islands of Zanzibar (150), with a capital (30) of the same name, and the island of Pemba (50), and a strip of the coast extending 10 m. inland from Cape Delgado to Kipini; has a hot unhealthy climate, and a rich tropical vegetation; its products are cloves chiefly, coco-nuts, betel-nuts, and grain, and the exports ivory, india-rubber, gum, &c.; the natives are mostly Arab Mohammedans under a sultan.

ZAPOROGIANS, Cossacks of the Ukraine, who revolted under Mazeppa as chief, and were transported by Catherine II to the shores of the Sea of Azov.

ZARA (11), the capital of Dalmatia, and a seaport of Austria, on a promontory on the coast, 129 m. SE. of Trieste; it was founded by the Venetians, has a spacious harbour, was strongly fortified, and the chief manufactures are glass and a liqueur called maraschino.

ZARAGOZA. See SARAGOSSA.

ZEAL, the ancient Ceos, an island of the Grecian Archipelago; of great fertility; produces wine, honey, silk, and maize.

ZEALAND, the largest island in the Danish Archipelago, situated between the Cattegat and the Baltic, being 81 m. long and 67 m. broad, with COPENHAGEN (q. v.) on the E. coast; the surface is nearly everywhere fiat, and agriculture and cattle-rearing the chief industries.

ZEALAND (213), a province of the Netherlands, formed chiefly of islands, of which WALCHEREN (q. v.) is one, constituting a delta as if formed by the Maas and Scheldt; great part of it is reclaimed from the sea.

ZEALAND, NEW. See NEW ZEALAND.

ZEALOTS, THE, a fanatical party among the Jews in Judea, who rose in revolt against the Roman domination on the appointment over them of a Roman governor instead of a native prince, which they regarded as an insult to their religion and religious belief.

ZEBU, one of the Visaya group of the Philippine Islands, E. of Negros.

ZECHARIAH, a Hebrew prophet who appears to have been born in Babylon during the captivity, and to have prophesied in Jerusalem at the time of the restoration, and to have contributed by his prophecies to encourage the people in rebuilding the temple and reorganising its worship; his prophecies are divided into two great sections, but the authenticity of the latter has been much debated; he is reckoned one of the Minor Prophets.

ZEDLITZ, JOSEPH CHRISTIAN VON, poet, born in Austrian Silesia; entered and served in the army, and did service as a diplomatist; wrote dramas and lyrics, and translated Byron's "Childe Harold" into German (1790-1862).

ZEEHAN, a township of recent growth on the W. coast of Tasmania, with large silver-lead mines wrought by several companies, and a source of great wealth.

ZEIT-GEIST (i. e. Time-spirit), German name for the spirit of the time, or the dominant trend of life and thought at any particular period.

ZENITH, name of Arab origin given to the point of the heaven directly overhead, being as it were the pole of the horizon, the opposite point directly under foot being called the Nadir, a word of similar origin; the imaginary line connecting the two passes through the centre of the earth.

ZENO, Greek philosopher of the ELEATIC SCHOOL (q. v.), and who flourished in 500 B.C.; was the founder of the dialectic so successfully adopted by Socrates, which argues for a particular truth by demonstration of the absurdity that would follow from its denial, a process of argument known as the *reductio ad absurdum*.

ZENO, Greek philosopher, the founder of Stoic philosophy, born at Citium, in Cyprus, son of a merchant and bred to merchandise, but losing all in a shipwreck gave himself up to the study of philosophy; went to Athens, and after posing as a cynic at length opened a school of his own in the Stoa, where he taught to extreme old age a gospel called Stoicism, which, at the decline of the heathen world, proved the stay of many a noble soul that but for it would have died without sign, although it is thus "Sartor," in the way of apostrophe, underrates it: "Small is it that thou canst trample the Earth with its injuries under thy feet, as old Greek Zeno trained thee; thou canst love the Earth while it injures thee, and even because it injures thee; for this a Greater than Zeno was needed, and he too was sent" (342-270 B.C.). See STOICS, THE.

ZENOBIA, queen of Palmyra and ultimately of the East, whose ambition provoked the jealousy of the Emperor Aurelian, who marched an army against her, and after a succession of defeats subdued her and brought her to Rome to adorn his triumph as conqueror, though afterwards he presented her with a domain at Tivoli, where she spent the rest of her days in queen-like dignity, with her two sons by her side; she was a woman of great courage and surpassing beauty. See LONGINUS.

ZEPHANIAH, a Hebrew prophet who prophesied in the interval between the decline and fall of Nineveh and the hostile advance of Babylon; forewarned the nation of the judgment of God impending over them for their ungodliness, and exhorted them to repentance as the only way of averting the inevitable doom, while he at the same time encouraged the faithful to persevere in their godly course with the assurance that the day of judgment would be succeeded by a day of glorious deliverance, that

they would yet become "a name and a praise among the people of the earth."

ZEPHON (searcher of secrets), name of a cherub sent, along with ITHURIEL (q. v.), by the archangel Gabriel to find out the whereabouts of Satan after his flight from hell.

ZEPHYRUS, a personification in the Greek mythology of the West Wind, and in love with Flora.

ZERMATT, a small village of the canton Valais, in Switzerland, 23 in. SW. of Brieg, a great centre of tourists and the starting-point in particular for the ascent of the Matterhorn.

ZERO, a word of Arab origin signifying a cipher, and employed to denote a neutral point in scale between an ascending and descending series, or between positive and negative.

ZEUS, the chief deity of the Greeks, the sovereign ruler of the world, the father of gods and men, the mightiest of the gods, and to whose will as central all must bow; he was the son of Kronos and Rhea; by the help of his brothers and sisters dethroned his father, seized the sovereign power, and appointed them certain provinces of the universe to administer in his name--Hera to rule with him as queen above, Poseidon over the sea, Pluto over the nether world, Demeter over the fruits of the earth, Hestia over social life of mankind; to his dynasty all the powers in heaven and earth were more or less related, descended from it and dependent on it; and he himself was to the Greeks the symbol of the intelligence which was henceforth to be the life and light of men, an idea which is reflected in the name Jupiter given him by the Romans, which means "father of the day"; he is represented as having his throne in heaven, and as wielding a thunderbolt in his right hand, in symbol of the jealousy with which he guards the order of the world established under him as chief.

ZEUSS, JOHANN KASPAR, great Celtic scholar, and the founder of Celtic philology, born at Voghtendorf, in Upper Franconia, professor at Bamberg; his great work, "Grammatica Celtica" (1806-1856).

ZEUXIS, famous Greek painter, born at Heraclea, and who flourished from 420 B.C. to the close of the century; was unrivalled in rendering types of sensuous, specially female, beauty, and his principal works are

his pictures of "Helen," "Zeus Enthroned," "The Infant Hercules Strangling the Serpent"; he is said to have given away several of his works rather than sell them, as no price could pay him for them.

ZIDON, an ancient town of Phoenicia, 20 m. N. of Tyre, and the original capital.

ZIETHEN, JOHANN JOACHIM VON, Prussian general, born in Russia; entered the army at the age of 15, served as a cavalry officer under Frederick the Great, was one of the greatest of his generals, became his personal friend, and contributed to a great many of his victories, all of which he lived through, spending his days thereafter in quiet retirement at Berlin in favour with the people and in honour to the last with the king; is described by Carlyle at 45 as "beautiful" to him, though with "face one of the coarsest," but "face thrice-honest, intricately ploughed with thoughts which are well kept silent (the thoughts indeed being themselves mostly inarticulate, thoughts of a simple-hearted, much-enduring, hot-tempered son of iron and oatmeal); decidedly rather likeable" (1699-1786). See Carlyle's "Frederick."

ZIG, a giant cock in the Talmud (q. v.), which stands with its foot on the earth, touches heaven with its head, and when it spreads its wings causes a total eclipse of the sun.

ZILLERTHAL, a valley in the Tyrol, watered by the Ziller, an affluent of the Inn, some 400 of the inhabitants of which were in 1837 obliged to seek a home elsewhere because of their opposition to the practice of auricular confession, and which they found near Liegnitz, in Prussian Silesia.

ZIMBABYE, a remarkable ruin in Mashonaland, the remains apparently of some enterprising colony of nature-worshippers that settled there in ancient times, in the interest of trade presumably.

ZIMMERMANN, JOHAN GEORG VON, Swiss physician, born at Brugg, in the canton of Bern; studied at Göttingen, became the friend of HALLER (q. v.), and settled down to practice in his native town, where he continued 16 years, very successful both in medicine and literature, but "tormented with hypochondria," and wrote his book on "Solitude," which was translated into every European language; wrote also on "Medical Experiences," a famed book in its day too, also on "National Pride," and became "famed throughout the universe"; attended Frederick the Great on his deathbed, and wrote an unwise book about him, "a poor puddle of

calumnies and credulities" (1728-1795). For insight into the man and his ways see CARLYLE'S "FREDERICK," a curious record.

ZINDIKITES, a Mohammedan heretical sect, who disbelieve in Allah, and deny the resurrection and a future life.

ZINZENDORF, a German count, born in Dresden; studied at Wittenberg, came under the influence of the Pietist Spener, gave himself up to evangelical labours, and established a religious community on his estate at Herrnhut, in Saxony, consisting chiefly of a body of Moravian Brethren, who had been driven out of Bohemia and Moravia on account of their religious opinions, and were called Herrnhuters, of which he became one of the leaders and chief apostles, labouring far and wide in the propagation of their doctrines and suffering no small persecution by the way; he was an earnest man, the author of religious writings, controversial and devotional; wrote a number of hymns, and died at Herrnhut, from which he was driven forth, but to which he was allowed to return before the end (1700-1760).

ZION, that one of the four hills on which Jerusalem is built, on the SW. of the city, and the site of the palace of King David and his successors.

ZIONISM, the name given a movement on the part of the Jews to re-establish themselves in Palestine as a nation.

ZOAR, a small village of Ohio, U.S., 91 m. S. of Cleveland, and the seat of a German Socialistic community.

ZÖCKLER, OTTO, German theologian, professor at Greifswald; edited a "Handbuch der theologischen Wissenschaft," and other works; _b_. 1833.

ZODIAC, the name given to a belt of the heavens extending 8° on each side of the ecliptic, composed of twelve constellations called signs of the zodiac, which the sun traverses in the course of a year. These signs, of which six are on the N. of the ecliptic and six on the S., are, commencing with the former, named successively: Aries, the Ram; Taurus, the Bull; Gemini, the Twins; Cancer, the Crab; Leo, the Lion; Virgo, the Virgin; Libra, the Balance; Scorpio, the Scorpion; Sagittarius, the Archer; Capricornus, the Goat; Aquarius, the Water-bearer; and Pisces, the Fishes. The sun enters Aries at the spring equinox and Libra at the autumnal equinox, while the first point of Cancer marks the summer

solstice, and that of Capricorn the winter. The name Zodiac is derived from the Greek *_zoon_*, an animal, and has been given to the belt because the majority of the signs are named after animals.

ZODIACAL LIGHT, a track of light of triangular figure with its base on the horizon, which in low latitudes is seen within the sun's equatorial plane before sunrise in the E. or after sunset in the W., and which is presumed to be due to a glow proceeding from some illuminated matter surrounding the sun.

ZOHAR, a Jewish book of cabalistic commentaries on the Old Testament.

ZOILUS, a Greek rhetorician who flourished in the 3rd century B.C.; was distinguished for the bitterness with which he criticised Homer, and whose name has in consequence become a synonym for a malignant critic, hence the saying, "Every great poet has his Zoilus."

ZOLA, ÉMILE, a noted French novelist of the realistic school, or of what he prefers to call the naturalist school, born in Paris, of Italian descent; began literature as a journalist, specially in the critical department, but soon gave himself up to novel-writing, ultimately on realistic lines, and an undue catering, as some think, to a morbid interest on the seamy side of life, to which he addressed himself with great vigour and not a little graphic power, but in an entire misconception of his proper functions as an artist and a man of letters, though, it may be pleaded, he has done so from a strong conviction on his part that his duty lay the other way, and that it was high time literature should, regardless of merely dilettante æstheticism, address itself to exposing, by depicting it, the extent to which the evil genius is gnawing at and corroding the vitals of society; and it is not for a moment to be supposed he has done so from any pleasure he takes in gloating over the doings of the ghoul, or that he is in sympathy with those who do; of his works suffice it to mention here some recent ones, as the story of "Lourdes," published in 1894, "Rome" in 1896, and "Paris" in 1897; he has recently distinguished himself by his courage in connection with the Dreyfus affair and his bold condemnation of the sentence under which Dreyfus was condemned; *_b_*. 1840.

ZOLAISM, name given to an excessive realism in depicting the worst side of human life and society. See ZOLA.

ZOLLVEREIN (Customs Union), a union of the German States under

Prussia in 1827, and extended in 1867, to establish among them a uniform system of customs rates.

ZONES, the name given to belts of climate on the surface of the earth marked off by the tropical and polar circles, of which the former are $23\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ from the equator and the latter $23\frac{1}{2}^{\circ}$ from the poles, the zone between the tropical circles, subject to extremes of heat, being called the Torrid Zone, the zones between the polar circles and the poles, subject to extremes of cold, being called respectively the North Frigid Zone and the South Frigid Zone, and the zones north and south of the Torrid, subject to moderate temperature, being called respectively the North Temperate, and the South Temperate Zone.

ZOROASTER, ZARATHUSTHRA, or ZERDUSHT, the founder or reformer of the Parsee religion, of whom, though certainly a historical personage, nothing whatever is for certain known except that his family name was Spitama, that he was born in Bactria, and that he could not have flourished later than 800 B.C.; he appears to have been a pure monotheist, and not to be responsible for the Manichean doctrine of dualism associated with his name, as Zoroastrianism, or the institution of fire-worship.

ZOSIMUS, Greek historian; wrote a history of the Roman emperors from the time of Augustus to the year 410, and ascribed the decline of the empire to the decay of paganism (408-450).

ZOUAVES, the name given to a body of light infantry in the French army wearing the Arab dress, a costume copied from that of Kabyles, in North Africa, and adopted since the French conquest of Algiers; some regiments of them consist of French soldiers, some of Algerines, though originally the two were incorporated into one body.

ZOUTSPANSBERG, a ridge of mountains on the NE. of the Transvaal, being a continuation of the Drakensberg.

ZSCHOKKE, JOHANN HEINRICH, a German writer, born in Magdeburg, lived chiefly at Aarau, in Aargau, Switzerland, where he spent forty years of his life, part of them in the service of his adopted country, and where he died; wrote histories, and a series of tales, but is best known by his "Stunden der Andacht" (i. e. hours of devotion), on ethico-rationalistic lines (1771-1845).

ZUG (23), the smallest canton of Switzerland, and sends only one representative to the National Council; is 12 m. long by 9 m. broad; is hilly and pastoral in the SE., and has cultivated fields and orchards in the NW.; all but includes Lake Zug, at the NE. of which is Zug (5), the capital, which carries on sundry industries on a small scale.

ZUIDER ZEE (i. e. south sea), a deep inlet of the North Sea, in the Netherlands, which includes the islands of Texel, Vlieland, Terschelling, and Ameland, and was formed by irruptions of the North Sea into a lake called Flevo, in the 12th, 13th, and 14th centuries, when thousands of people were drowned; is 85 m. long and 45 m. broad, and is embraced in a circuit of 210 m.; it was for some time in contemplation to reclaim this area, and after much weighing of the matter the Dutch Government in 1897 adopted a scheme to give effect to this project; according to the scheme adopted it is reckoned it will take 31 years to complete the reclamation at the rate of several thousand acres every year.

ZULEIKA, the bride of Abydos, celebrated by Byron, a pure-souled woman of great beauty, who, in love with Selim, promises to flee with him and become his bride, but her father shoots him, and she dies of a broken heart.

ZULULAND (181), a territory to the NE. of Natal, from which it is separated by the Tugela, and of which it was independent till 1898, but it is now an integral part; it is a little larger than Belgium, is well watered, is capable of cultivation, and has 140 m. of seaboard; it is understood to possess some mineral wealth, though it has not yet been wrought.

ZULUS, a section of the Bantu family which originally occupied the SE. seaboard of Africa from Delagoa Bay to the Great Fish River; they are a race of superior physique and intellectual endowment, as well as moral temperament, and incline to a quiet pastoral life; they were attacked under Cetywayo by the English in 1879, but after falling upon an English force at Isandula, and cutting it in pieces, were overpowered at Ulundi, and put to rout.

ZUMPT, KARL, philologist, born in Berlin, and professor at the University; edited a number of the Latin classics, and is best known by his Latin Grammar (1792-1849).

ZURBARAN, FRANCISCO, Spanish painter, born in Estremadura; did

mostly religious subjects; his *_chef-d'oeuvre_* an altar-piece in Seville, where he lived and worked (1598-1662).

ZURICH (392), a northern canton in Switzerland, and the second largest; is in the basin of the Rhine, with a well-cultivated fertile soil, and manufactures of cottons and silks, and with a capital (151) of the same name at the foot of the Lake of Zurich; a large manufacturing and trading centre; has a Romanesque cathedral and a university, with silk mills and cotton mills, as well as foundries and machine shops; here Lavater was born and Zwingli was pastor.

ZUTPHEN (17), manufacturing town in the Dutch province of Guelderland, in the neighbourhood of which Sir Philip Sidney fell wounded in a skirmish.

ZWICKAU (50), a town in Saxony, in a division (1,389) of the same name, 82 m. SW. of Dresden; it is in the midst of rich beds of coal, and has a number of manufactures.

ZWINGLI, ULRICH, the Swiss Reformer, born at Wildhaus, in the canton of St. Gall, and founder of the Reformed Church; studied at Bern and Vienna, afterwards theology at Basel, and was appointed pastor at Glarus; he got acquainted with Erasmus at Basel, and gave himself to the study of Greek, and in particular the epistles of St. Paul; attached to the monastery of Einsiedeln he, in 1516, attacked the sale of indulgences, and was in 1518 elected to be preacher in the cathedral of Zurich; his preaching was attended with an awakening, and the bishop of Constance tried to silence him, but he was silenced himself in a public debate with the Reformer, the result of which was the abolition of the Mass and the dispensation instead of the Lord's Supper; the movement thus begun went on and spread, and Zwingli met in conference with Luther, but they failed to agree on the matter of the Eucharist, and on that point the Lutheran and the Reformed Churches separated; in 1531 the Catholic cantons declared war against the reformers of Zurich and Bern, but the latter were defeated at Cappel, and among the dead on the battlefield was the Reformer; his last words were, "They may kill the body, but not the soul" (1484-1531). See LUTHERANS.

ZWOLLE (25), a manufacturing town in the Dutch province of Oberyssel, 50 m. NE. of Amsterdam; close to it is Agnetenberg, famous as the seat of the monastery where Thomas à Kempis lived and died.

ZYME, name of a germ presumed to be the cause of zymotic diseases.

ZYMOTIC DISEASES, diseases of a contagious nature, presumed to be due to some virus or organism which acts in the system like a ferment.

JEAN GOURDON'S FOUR DAYS

BY EMILE **Z**OLA

Project Gutenberg's *International Short Stories: French*, by Various

SPRING

On that particular day, at about five o'clock in the morning, the sun entered with delightful abruptness into the little room I occupied at the house of my uncle Lazare, parish priest of the hamlet of Dourgues. A broad yellow ray fell upon my closed eyelids, and I awoke in light.

My room, which was whitewashed, and had deal furniture, was full of attractive gaiety. I went to the window and gazed at the Durance, which traced its broad course amidst the dark green verdure of the valley. Fresh puffs of wind caressed my face, and the murmur of the trees and river seemed to call me to them.

I gently opened my door. To get out I had to pass through my uncle's room. I proceeded on tip-toe, fearing the creaking of my thick boots might awaken the worthy man, who was still slumbering with a smiling countenance. And I trembled at the sound of the church bell tolling the Angelus. For some days past my uncle Lazare had been following me about everywhere, looking sad and annoyed. He would perhaps have prevented me going over there to the edge of the river, and hiding myself among the willows on the bank, so as to watch for Babet passing, that tall dark girl who had come with the spring.

But my uncle was sleeping soundly. I felt something like remorse in deceiving him and running away in this manner. I stayed for an instant and gazed on his calm countenance, with its gentle expression enhanced by rest, and I recalled to mind with feeling the day when he had come to fetch me in the chilly and deserted home which my mother's funeral was leaving. Since that day, what tenderness, what devotedness, what good advice he had bestowed on me! He had given me his knowledge and his kindness, all his intelligence and all his heart.

I was tempted for a moment to cry out to him:

"Get up, uncle Lazare! let us go for a walk together along that path you are so fond of beside the Durance. You will enjoy the fresh air and

morning sun. You will see what an appetite you will have on your return!"

And Babet, who was going down to the river in her light morning gown, and whom I should not be able to see! My uncle would be there, and I would have to lower my eyes. It must be so nice under the willows, lying flat on one's stomach, in the fine grass! I felt a languid feeling creeping over me, and, slowly, taking short steps, holding my breath, I reached the door. I went downstairs, and began running like a madcap in the delightful, warm May morning air.

The sky was quite white on the horizon, with exquisitely delicate blue and pink tints. The pale sun seemed like a great silver lamp, casting a shower of bright rays into the Durance. And the broad, sluggish river, expanding lazily over the red sand, extended from one end of the valley to the other, like a stream of liquid metal. To the west, a line of low rugged hills threw slight violet streaks on the pale sky.

I had been living in this out-of-the-way corner for ten years. How often had I kept my uncle Lazare waiting to give me my Latin lesson! The worthy man wanted to make me learned. But I was on the other side of the Durance, ferreting out magpies, discovering a hill which I had not yet climbed. Then, on my return, there were remonstrances: the Latin was forgotten, my poor uncle scolded me for having torn my trousers, and he shuddered when he noticed sometimes that the skin underneath was cut. The valley was mine, really mine; I had conquered it with my legs, and I was the real landlord by right of friendship. And that bit of river, those two leagues of the Durance, how I loved them, how well we understood one another when together! I knew all the whims of my dear stream, its anger, its charming ways, its different features at each hour of the day.

When I reached the water's edge on that particular morning, I felt something like giddiness at seeing it so gentle and so white. It had never looked so gay. I slipped rapidly beneath the willows, to an open space where a broad patch of sunlight fell on the dark grass. There I laid me down on my stomach, listening, watching the pathway by which Babet would come, through the branches.

"Oh! how sound uncle Lazare must be sleeping!" I thought.

And I extended myself at full length on the moss. The sun struck gentle heat into my back, whilst my breast, buried in the grass, was quite cool.

Have you never examined the turf, at close quarters, with your eyes on the blades of grass? Whilst I was waiting for Babet, I pried indiscreetly into a tuft which was really a whole world. In my bunch of grass there were streets, cross roads, public squares, entire cities. At the bottom of it, I distinguished a great dark patch where the shoots of the previous spring were decaying sadly, then slender stalks were growing up, stretching out, bending into a multitude of elegant forms, and producing frail colonnades,

churches, virgin forests. I saw two lean insects wandering in the midst of this immensity; the poor children were certainly lost, for they went from colonnade to colonnade, from street to street, in an affrighted, anxious way.

It was just at this moment that, on raising my eyes, I saw Babet's white skirts standing out against the dark ground at the top of the pathway. I recognized her printed calico gown, which was grey, with small blue flowers. I sunk down deeper in the grass, I heard my heart thumping against the earth and almost raising me with slight jerks. My breast was burning now, I no longer felt the freshness of the dew.

The young girl came nimbly down the pathway, her skirts skimming the ground with a swinging motion that charmed me, I saw her at full length, quite erect, in her proud and happy gracefulness. She had no idea I was there behind the willows; she walked with a light step, she ran without giving a thought to the wind, which slightly raised her gown. I could distinguish her feet, trotting along quickly, quickly, and a piece of her white stockings, which was perhaps as large as one's hand, and which made me blush in a manner that was alike sweet and painful.

Oh! then, I saw nothing else, neither the Durance, nor the willows, nor the whiteness of the sky. What cared I for the valley! It was no longer my sweetheart; I was quite indifferent to its joy and its sadness. What cared I for my friends, the stories, and the trees on the hills! The river could run away all at once if it liked; I would not have regretted it.

And the spring, I did not care a bit about the spring! Had it borne away the sun that warmed my back, its leaves, its rays, all its May morning, I should have remained there, in ecstasy, gazing at Babet, running along the pathway, and swinging her skirts deliciously. For Babet had taken the valley's place in my heart, Babet was the spring, I had never spoken to her. Both of us blushed when we met one another in my uncle Lazare's church. I could have vowed she detested me.

She talked on that particular day for a few minutes with the women who were washing. The sound of her pearly laughter reached as far as me, mingled with the loud voice of the Durance. Then she stooped down to take a little water in the hollow of her hand; but the bank was high, and Babet, who was on the point of slipping, saved herself by clutching the grass. I gave a frightful shudder, which made my blood run cold. I rose hastily, and, without feeling ashamed, without reddening, ran to the young girl. She cast a startled look at me; then she began to smile. I bent down, at the risk of falling. I succeeded in filling my right hand with water by keeping my fingers close together. And I presented this new sort of cup to Babet' asking her to drink.

The women who were washing laughed. Babet, confused, did not dare accept; she hesitated, and half turned her head away. At last she made up her

mind, and delicately pressed her lips to the tips of my fingers; but she had waited too long, all the water had run away. Then she burst out laughing, she became a child again, and I saw very well that she was making fun of me.

I was very silly. I bent forward again. This time I took the water in both hands and hastened to put them to Babet's lips. She drank, and I felt the warm kiss from her mouth run up my arms to my breast, which it filled with heat.

"Oh! how my uncle must sleep!" I murmured to myself.

Just as I said that, I perceived a dark shadow beside me, and, having turned round, I saw my uncle Lazare, in person, a few paces away, watching Babet and me as if offended. His cassock appeared quite white in the sun; in his look I saw reproaches which made me feel inclined to cry.

Babet was very much afraid. She turned quite red, and hurried off stammering:

"Thanks, Monsieur Jean, I thank you very much."

As for me, wiping my wet hands, I stood motionless and confused before my uncle Lazare.

The worthy man, with folded arms, and bringing back a corner of his cassock, watched Babet, who was running up the pathway without turning her head. Then, when she had disappeared behind the hedges, he lowered his eyes to me, and I saw his pleasant countenance smile sadly.

"Jean," he said to me, "come into the broad walk. Breakfast is not ready. We have half an hour to spare."

He set out with his rather heavy tread, avoiding the tufts of grass wet with dew. A part of the bottom of his cassock that was dragging along the ground, made a dull crackling sound. He held his breviary under his arm; but he had forgotten his morning lecture, and he advanced dreamily, with bowed head, and without uttering a word.

His silence tormented me. He was generally so talkative. My anxiety increased at each step. He had certainly seen me giving Babet water to drink. What a sight, O Lord! The young girl, laughing and blushing, kissed the tips of my fingers, whilst I, standing on tip-toe, stretching out my arms, was leaning forward as if to kiss her. My action now seemed to me frightfully audacious. And all my timidity returned. I inquired of myself how I could have dared to have my fingers kissed so sweetly.

And my uncle Lazare, who said nothing, who continued walking with short steps in front of me, without giving a single glance at the old trees he

loved! He was assuredly preparing a sermon. He was only taking me into the broad walk to scold me at his ease. It would occupy at least an hour: breakfast would get cold, and I would be unable to return to the water's edge and dream of the warm burns that Babet's lips had left on my hands.

We were in the broad walk. This walk, which was wide and short, ran beside the river; it was shaded by enormous oak trees, with trunks lacerated by seams, stretching out their great, tall branches. The fine grass spread like a carpet beneath the trees, and the sun, riddling the foliage, embroidered this carpet with a rosaceous pattern in gold. In the distance, all around, extended raw green meadows.

My uncle went to the bottom of the walk, without altering his step and without turning round. Once there, he stopped, and I kept beside him, understanding that the terrible moment had arrived.

The river made a sharp curve; a low parapet at the end of the walk formed a sort of terrace. This vault of shade opened on a valley of light. The country expanded wide before us, for several leagues. The sun was rising in the heavens, where the silvery rays of morning had become transformed into a stream of gold; blinding floods of light ran from the horizon, along the hills, and spread out into the plain with the glare of fire.

After a moment's silence, my uncle Lazare turned towards me.

"Good heavens, the sermon!" I thought, and I bowed my head. My uncle pointed out the valley to me, with an expansive gesture; then, drawing himself up, he said, slowly:

"Look, Jean, there is the spring. The earth is full of joy, my boy, and I have brought you here, opposite this plain of light, to show you the first smiles of the young season. Observe what brilliancy and sweetness! Warm perfumes rise from the country and pass across our faces like puffs of life."

He was silent and seemed dreaming. I had raised my head, astonished, breathing at ease. My uncle was not preaching.

"It is a beautiful morning," he continued, "a morning of youth. Your eighteen summers find full enjoyment amidst this verdure which is at most eighteen days old. All is great brightness and perfume, is it not? The broad valley seems to you a delightful place: the river is there to give you its freshness, the trees to lend you their shade, the whole country to speak to you of tenderness, the heavens themselves to kiss those horizons that you are searching with hope and desire. The spring belongs to fellows of your age. It is it that teaches the boys how to give young girls to drink--"

I hung my head again. My uncle Lazare had certainly seen me.

"An old fellow like me," he continued, "unfortunately knows what trust to place in the charms of spring. I, my poor Jean, I love the Durance because it waters these meadows and gives life to all the valley; I love this young foliage because it proclaims to me the coming of the fruits of summer and autumn; I love this sky because it is good to us, because its warmth hastens the fecundity of the earth. I should have had to tell you this one day or other; I prefer telling it you now, at this early hour. It is spring itself that is giving you the lesson. The earth is a vast workshop wherein there is never a slack season. Observe this flower at our feet; to you it is perfume; to me it is labour, it accomplishes its task by producing its share of life, a little black seed which will work in its turn, next spring. And, now, search the vast horizon. All this joy is but the act of generation. If the country be smiling, it is because it is beginning the everlasting task again. Do you hear it now, breathing hard, full of activity and haste? The leaves sigh, the flowers are in a hurry, the corn grows without pausing; all the plants, all the herbs are quarrelling as to which shall spring up the quickest; and the running water, the river comes to assist in the common labour, and the young sun which rises in the heavens is entrusted with the duty of enlivening the everlasting task of the labourers."

At this point my uncle made me look him straight in the face. He concluded in these terms:

"Jean, you hear what your friend the spring says to you. He is youth, but he is preparing ripe age; his bright smile is but the gaiety of labour. Summer will be powerful, autumn bountiful, for the spring is singing at this moment, while courageously performing its work."

I looked very stupid. I understood my uncle Lazare. He was positively preaching me a sermon, in which he told me I was an idle fellow and that the time had come to work.

My uncle appeared as much embarrassed as myself. After having hesitated for some instants he said, slightly stammering:

"Jean, you were wrong not to have come and told me all--as you love Babet and Babet loves you--"

"Babet loves me!" I exclaimed.

My uncle made me an ill-humoured gesture.

"Eh! allow me to speak. I don't want another avowal. She owned it to me herself."

"She owned that to you, she owned that to you!"

And I suddenly threw my arms round my uncle Lazare's neck.

"Oh! how nice that is!" I added. "I had never spoken to her, truly. She told you that at the confessional, didn't she? I would never have dared ask her if she loved me, and I would never have known anything. Oh! how I thank you!"

My uncle Lazare was quite red. He felt that he had just committed a blunder. He had imagined that this was not my first meeting with the young girl, and here he gave me a certainty, when as yet I only dared dream of a hope. He held his tongue now; it was I who spoke with volubility.

"I understand all," I continued. "You are right, I must work to win Babet. But you will see how courageous I shall be. Ah! how good you are, my uncle Lazare, and how well you speak! I understand what the spring says: I, also, will have a powerful summer and an autumn of abundance. One is well placed here, one sees all the valley; I am young like it, I feel youth within me demanding to accomplish its task--"

My uncle calmed me.

"Very good, Jean," he said to me. "I had long hoped to make a priest of you, and I imparted to you my knowledge with that sole aim. But what I saw this morning at the waterside compels me to definitely give up my fondest hope. It is Heaven that disposes of us. You will love the Almighty in another way. You cannot now remain in this village, and I only wish you to return when ripened by age and work. I have chosen the trade of printer for you; your education will serve you. One of my friends, who is a printer at Grenoble, is expecting you next Monday."

I felt anxious.

"And I shall come back and marry Babet?" I inquired.

My uncle smiled imperceptibly; and, without answering in a direct manner, said:

"The remainder is the will of Heaven."

"You are heaven, and I have faith in your kindness. Oh! uncle, see that Babet does not forget me. I will work for her."

Then my uncle Lazare again pointed out to me the valley which the warm golden light was overspreading more and more.

"There is hope," he said to me. "Do not be as old as I am, Jean. Forget my sermon, be as ignorant as this land. It does not trouble about the autumn; it is all engrossed with the joy of its smile; it labours, courageously and without a care. It hopes."

And we returned to the parsonage, strolling along slowly in the grass, which was scorched by the sun, and chatting with concern of our approaching separation.

Breakfast was cold, as I had foreseen; but that did not trouble me much. I had tears in my eyes each time I looked at my uncle Lazare. And, at the thought of Babet, my heart beat fit to choke me.

I do not remember what I did during the remainder of the day. I think I went and lay down under the willows at the riverside. My uncle was right, the earth was at work. On placing my ear to the grass I seemed to hear continual sounds. Then I dreamed of what my life would be. Buried in the grass until nightfall, I arranged an existence full of labour divided between Babet and my uncle Lazare. The energetic youthfulness of the soil had penetrated my breast, which I pressed with force against the common mother, and at times I imagined myself to be one of the strong willows that lived around me. In the evening I could not dine. My uncle, no doubt, understood the thoughts that were choking me, for he feigned not to notice my want of appetite. As soon as I was able to rise from table, I hastened to return and breathe the open air outside.

A fresh breeze rose from the river, the dull splashing of which I heard in the distance. A soft light fell from the sky. The valley expanded, peaceful and transparent, like a dark shoreless ocean. There were vague sounds in the air, a sort of impassioned tremor, like a great flapping of wings passing above my head. Penetrating perfumes rose with the cool air from the grass.

I had gone out to see Babet; I knew she came to the parsonage every night, and I went and placed myself in ambush behind a hedge. I had got rid of my timidity of the morning; I considered it quite natural to be waiting for her there, because she loved me and I had to tell her of my departure.

"When I perceived her skirts in the limpid night, I advanced noiselessly. Then I murmured in a low voice:

"Babet, Babet, I am here."

She did not recognise me, at first, and started with fright. When she discovered who it was, she seemed still more frightened, which very much surprised me.

"It's you, Monsieur Jean," she said to me. "What are you doing there? What do you want?"

I was beside her and took her hand.

"You love me fondly, do you not?"

"I! who told you that?"

"My uncle Lazare."

She stood there in confusion. Her hand began to tremble in mine. As she was on the point of running away, I took her other hand. We were face to face, in a sort of hollow in the hedge, and I felt Babet's panting breath running all warm over my face. The freshness of the air, the rustling silence of the night, hung around us.

"I don't know," stammered the young girl, "I never said that--his reverence the curé misunderstood--For mercy's sake, let me be, I am in a hurry."

"No, no," I continued, "I want you to know that I am going away to-morrow, and to promise to love me always."

"You are leaving to-morrow!"

Oh! that sweet cry, and how tenderly Babet uttered it! I seem still to hear her apprehensive voice full of affliction and love.

"You see," I exclaimed in my turn, "that my uncle Lazare said the truth. Besides, he never tells fibs. You love me, you love me, Babet! Your lips this morning confided the secret very softly to my fingers."

And I made her sit down at the foot of the hedge. My memory has retained my first chat of love in its absolute innocence. Babet listened to me like a little sister. She was no longer afraid, she told me the story of her love. And there were solemn sermons, ingenious avowals, projects without end. She vowed she would marry no one but me, I vowed to deserve her hand by labour and tenderness. There was a cricket behind the hedge, who accompanied our chat with his chaunt of hope, and all the valley, whispering in the dark, took pleasure in hearing us talk so softly.

On separating we forgot to kiss each other.

When I returned to my little room, it appeared to me that I had left it for at least a year. That day which was so short, seemed an eternity of happiness. It was the warmest and most sweetly-scented spring-day of my life, and the remembrance of it is now like the distant, faltering voice of my youth.

II

SUMMER

When I awoke at about three o'clock in the morning on that particular day,

I was lying on the hard ground tired out, and with my face bathed in perspiration. The hot heavy atmosphere of a July night weighed me down.

My companions were sleeping around me, wrapped in their hooded cloaks; they speckled the grey ground with black, and the obscure plain panted; I fancied I heard the heavy breathing of a slumbering multitude. Indistinct sounds, the neighing of horses, the clash of arms rang out amidst the rustling silence.

The army had halted at about midnight, and we had received orders to lie down and sleep. We had been marching for three days, scorched by the sun and blinded by dust. The enemy were at length in front of us, over there, on those hills on the horizon. At daybreak a decisive battle would be fought.

I had been a victim to despondency. For three days I had been as if trampled on, without energy and without thought for the future. It was the excessive fatigue, indeed, that had just awakened me. Now, lying on my back, with my eyes wide open, I was thinking whilst gazing into the night, I thought of this battle, this butchery, which the sun was about to light up. For more than six years, at the first shot in each fight, I had been saying good-bye to those I loved the most fondly, Babet and uncle Lazare. And now, barely a month before my discharge, I had to say good-bye again, and this time perhaps for ever.

Then my thoughts softened. With closed eyelids I saw Babet and my uncle Lazare. How long it was since I had kissed them! I remembered the day of our separation; my uncle weeping because he was poor, and allowing me to leave like that, and Babet, in the evening, had vowed she would wait for me, and that she would never love another. I had had to quit all, my master at Grenoble, my friends at Dourgues. A few letters had come from time to time to tell me they always loved me, and that happiness was awaiting me in my well-beloved valley. And I, I was going to fight, I was going to get killed.

I began dreaming of my return. I saw my poor old uncle on the threshold of the parsonage extending his trembling arms; and behind him was Babet, quite red, smiling through her tears. I fell into their arms and kissed them, seeking for expressions--

Suddenly the beating of drums recalled me to stern reality. Daybreak had come, the grey plain expanded in the morning mist. The ground became full of life, indistinct forms appeared on all sides; a sound that became louder and louder filled the air; it was the call of bugles, the galloping of horses, the rumble of artillery, the shouting out of orders. War came threatening, amidst my dream of tenderness. I rose with difficulty; it seemed to me that my bones were broken, and that my head was about to split. I hastily got my men together; for I must tell you that I had won the rank of sergeant. We soon received orders to bear to the left and

occupy a hillock above the plain.

As we were about to move, the sergeant-major came running along and shouting:

"A letter for Sergeant Gourdon!"

And he handed me a dirty crumpled letter, which had been lying perhaps for a week in the leather bags of the post-office. I had only just time to recognise the writing of my uncle Lazare.

"Forward, march!" shouted the major.

I had to march. For a few seconds I held the poor letter in my hand, devouring it with my eyes; it burnt my fingers; I would have given everything in the world to have sat down and wept at ease whilst reading it. I had to content myself with slipping it under my tunic against my heart.

I have never experienced such agony. By way of consolation I said to myself what my uncle had so often repeated to me: I was in the summer of my life, at the moment of the fierce struggle, and it was essential that I should perform my duty bravely, if I would have a peaceful and bountiful autumn. But these reasons exasperated me the more: this letter, which had come to speak to me of happiness, burnt my heart, which had revolted against the folly of war. And I could not even read it! I was perhaps going to die without knowing what it contained, without perusing my uncle Lazare's affectionate remarks for the last time.

We had reached the top of the hill. We were to await orders there to advance. The battle-field had been marvellously chosen to slaughter one another at ease. The immense plain expanded for several leagues, and was quite bare, without a house or tree. Hedges and bushes made slight spots on the whiteness of the ground. I have never since seen such a country, an ocean of dust, a chalky soil, bursting open here and there, and displaying its tawny bowels. And never either have I since witnessed a sky of such intense purity, a July day so lovely and so warm; at eight o'clock the sultry heat was already scorching our faces. O the splendid morning, and what a sterile plain to kill and die in!

Firing had broken out with irregular crackling sounds, a long time since, supported by the solemn growl of the cannon. The enemy, Austrians dressed in white, had quitted the heights, and the plain was studded with long files of men, who looked to me about as big as insects. One might have thought it was an ant-hill in insurrection. Clouds of smoke hung over the battle-field. At times, when these clouds broke asunder, I perceived soldiers in flight, smitten with terrified panic. Thus there were currents of fright which bore men away, and outbursts of shame and courage which brought them back under fire.

I could neither hear the cries of the wounded, nor see the blood flow. I could only distinguish the dead which the battalions left behind them, and which resembled black patches. I began to watch the movements of the troops with curiosity, irritated at the smoke which hid a good half of the show, experiencing a sort of egotistic pleasure at the knowledge that I was in security, whilst others were dying.

At about nine o'clock we were ordered to advance. We went down the hill at the double and proceeded towards the centre which was giving way. The regular beat of our footsteps appeared to me funeral-like. The bravest among us panting, pale and with haggard features.

I have made up my mind to tell the truth. At the first whistle of the bullets, the battalion suddenly came to a halt, tempted to fly.

"Forward, forward!" shouted the chiefs.

But we were riveted to the ground, bowing our heads when a bullet whistled by our ears. This movement is instinctive; if shame had not restrained me, I would have thrown myself flat on my stomach in the dust.

"Before us was a huge veil of smoke which we dared not penetrate. Red flashes passed through this smoke. And, shuddering, we still stood still. But the bullets reached us; soldiers fell with yells. The chiefs shouted louder:

"Forward, forward!"

The rear ranks, which they pushed on, compelled us to march. Then, closing our eyes, we made a fresh dash and entered the smoke.

We were seized with furious rage. When the cry of "Halt!" resounded, we experienced difficulty in coming to a standstill. As soon as one is motionless, fear returns and one feels a wish to run away. Firing commenced. We shot in front of us, without aiming, finding some relief in discharging bullets into the smoke. I remember I pulled my trigger mechanically, with lips firmly set together and eyes wide open; I was no longer afraid, for, to tell the truth, I no longer knew if I existed. The only idea I had in my head, was that I would continue firing until all was over. My companion on the left received a bullet full in the face and fell on me; I brutally pushed him away, wiping my cheek which he had drenched with blood. And I resumed firing.

I still remember having seen our colonel, M. de Montrevert, firm and erect upon his horse, gazing quietly towards the enemy. That man appeared to me immense. He had no rifle to amuse himself with, and his breast was expanded to its full breadth above us. From time to time, he looked down, and exclaimed in a dry voice:

"Close the ranks, close the ranks!"

We closed our ranks like sheep, treading on the dead, stupefied, and continuing firing. Until then, the enemy had only sent us bullets; a dull explosion was heard and a shell carried off five of our men. A battery which must have been opposite us and which we could not see, had just opened fire. The shells struck into the middle of us, almost at one spot, making a sanguinary gap which we closed unceasingly with the obstinacy of ferocious brutes.

"Close the ranks, close the ranks!" the colonel coldly repeated.

We were giving the cannon human flesh. Each time a soldier was struck down, I was taking a step nearer death, I was approaching the spot where the shells were falling heavily, crushing the men whose turn had come to die. The corpses were forming heaps in that place, and soon the shells would strike into nothing more than a mound of mangled flesh; shreds of limbs flew about at each fresh discharge. We could no longer close the ranks.

The soldiers yelled, the chiefs themselves were moved.

"With the bayonet, with the bayonet!"

And amidst a shower of bullets the battalion rushed in fury towards the shells. The veil of smoke was torn asunder; we perceived the enemy's battery flaming red, which was firing at us from the mouths of all its pieces, on the summit of a hillock. But the dash forward had commenced, the shells stopped the dead only.

I ran beside Colonel Montrevert, whose horse had just been killed, and who was fighting like a simple soldier. Suddenly I was struck down; it seemed to me as if my breast opened and my shoulder was taken away. A frightful wind passed over my face.

And I fell. The colonel fell beside me. I felt myself dying. I thought of those I loved, and fainted whilst searching with a withering hand for my uncle Lazare's letter.

When I came to myself again I was lying on my side in the dust. I was annihilated by profound stupor. I gazed before me with my eyes wide open without seeing anything; it seemed to me that I had lost my limbs, and that my brain was empty. I did not suffer, for life seemed to have departed from my flesh.

The rays of a hot implacable sun fell upon my face like molten lead. I did not feel it. Life returned to me little by little; my limbs became lighter, my shoulder alone remained crushed beneath an enormous weight.

Then, with the instinct of a wounded animal, I wanted to sit up. I uttered a cry of pain, and fell back upon the ground.

But I lived now, I saw, I understood. The plain spread out naked and deserted, all white in the broad sunlight. It exhibited its desolation beneath the intense serenity of heaven; heaps of corpses were sleeping in the warmth, and the trees that had been brought down, seemed to be other dead who were dying. There was not a breath of air. A frightful silence came from those piles of inanimate bodies; then, at times, there were dismal groans which broke this silence, and conveyed a long tremor to it. Slender clouds of grey smoke hanging over the low hills on the horizon, was all that broke the bright blue of the sky. The butchery was continuing on the heights.

I imagined we were conquerors, and I experienced selfish pleasure in thinking I could die in peace on this deserted plain. Around me the earth was black. On raising my head I saw the enemy's battery on which we had charged, a few feet away from me. The struggle must have been horrible: the mound was covered with hacked and disfigured bodies; blood had flowed so abundantly that the dust seemed like a large red carpet. The cannon stretched out their dark muzzles above the corpses. I shuddered when I observed the silence of those guns.

Then gently, with a multitude of precautions, I succeeded in turning on my stomach. I rested my head on a large stone all splashed with gore, and drew my uncle Lazare's letter from my breast. I placed it before my eyes; but my tears prevented my reading it.

And whilst the sun was roasting me in the back, the acrid smell of blood was choking me. I could form an idea of the woeful plain around me, and was as if stiffened with the rigidity of the dead. My poor heart was weeping in the warm and loathsome silence of murder.

Uncle Lazare wrote to me:

"My Dear Boy,--I hear war has been declared; but I still hope you will get your discharge before the campaign opens. Every morning I beseech the Almighty to spare you new dangers; He will grant my prayer; He will, one of these days, let you close my eyes.

"Ah! my poor Jean, I am becoming old, I have great need of your arm. Since your departure I no more feel your youthfulness beside me, which gave me back my twenty summers. Do you remember our strolls in the morning along the oak-tree walk? Now I no longer dare to go beneath those trees; I am alone, I am afraid. The Durance weeps. Come quickly and console me, assuage my anxiety----"

The tears were choking me, I could not continue. At that moment a heartrending cry was uttered a few steps away from me; I saw a soldier

suddenly rise, with the muscles of his face contracted; he extended his arms in agony, and fell to the ground, where he writhed in frightful convulsions; then he ceased moving.

"I have placed my hope in the Almighty," continued my uncle, "He will bring you back safe and sound to Dourgues, and we will resume our peaceful existence. Let me dream out loud and tell you my plans for the future.

"You will go no more to Grenoble, you will remain with me; I will make my child a son of the soil, a peasant who shall live gaily whilst tilling the fields.

"And I will retire to your farm. In a short time my trembling hands will no longer be able to hold the Host. I only ask Heaven for two years of such an existence. That will be my reward for the few good deeds I may have done. Then you will sometimes lead me along the paths of our dear valley, where every rock, every hedge will remind me of your youth which I so greatly loved----"

I had to stop again. I felt such a sharp pain In my shoulder, that I almost fainted a second time. A terrible anxiety had just taken possession of me; it, seemed as if the sound of the fusillade was approaching, and I thought with terror that our army was perhaps retreating, and that in its flight it would descend to the plain and pass over my body. But I still saw nothing but the slight cloud, of smoke hanging over the low hills.

My uncle Lazare added:

"And we shall be three to love one another. Ah! my well-beloved Jean, how right you were to give her to drink that morning beside the Durance. I was afraid of Babet, I was ill-humoured, and now I am jealous, for I can see very well that I shall never be able to love you as much as she does, 'Tell him,' she repeated to me yesterday, blushing, 'that if he gets killed, I shall go and throw myself into the river at the spot where he gave me to drink.'

"For the love of God! be careful of your life. There are things that I cannot understand, but I feel that happiness awaits you here. I already call Babet my daughter; I can see her on your arm, in the church, when I shall bless your union. I wish that to be my last mass.

"Babet is a fine, tall girl now. She will, assist you in your work----"

The sound of the fusillade had gone farther away. I was weeping sweet tears. There were dismal moans among soldiers who were in their last agonies between the cannon wheels. I perceived one who was endeavoring to get rid of a comrade, wounded as he was, whose body was crushing his chest; and, as this wounded man struggled and complained, the soldier pushed him brutally away, and made him roll down the slope of the mound,

whilst the wretched creature yelled with pain. At that cry a murmur came from the heap of corpses. The sun, which was sinking, shed rays of a light fallow colour. The blue of the sky was softer.

I finished reading my uncle Lazare's letter.

"I simply wished," he continued, "to give you news of ourselves, and to beg you to come as soon as possible and make us happy. And here I am weeping and gossiping like an old child. Hope, my poor Jean, I pray, and God is good.

"Answer me quickly, and give me, if possible, the date of your return. Babet and I are counting the weeks. We trust to see you soon; be hopeful."

The date of my return!--I kissed the letter, sobbing, and fancied for a moment that I was kissing Babet and my uncle. No doubt I should never see them again. I would die like a dog in the dust, beneath the leaden sun. And it was on that desolated plain, amidst the death-rattle of the dying, that those whom I loved dearly were saying good-bye. A buzzing silence filled my ears; I gazed at the pale earth spotted with blood, which extended, deserted, to the grey lines of the horizon. I repeated: "I must die." Then, I closed my eyes, and thought of Babet and my uncle Lazare.

I know not how long I remained in a sort of painful drowsiness. My heart suffered as much as my flesh. Warm tears ran slowly down my cheeks. Amidst the nightmare that accompanied the fever, I heard a moan similar to the continuous plaintive cry of a child in suffering. At times, I awoke and stared at the sky in astonishment.

At last I understood that it was M. de Montrevert, lying a few paces off, who was moaning in this manner. I had thought him dead. He was stretched out with his face to the ground and his arms extended. This man had been good to me; I said to myself that I could not allow him to die thus, with his face to the ground, and I began crawling slowly towards him.

Two corpses separated us. For a moment I thought of passing over the stomachs of these dead men to shorten the distance; for, my shoulder made me suffer frightfully at every movement. But I did not dare. I proceeded on my knees, assisting myself with one hand. When I reached the colonel, I gave a sigh of relief; it seemed to me that I was less alone; we would die together, and this death shared by both of us no longer terrified me.

I wanted him to see the sun, and I turned him over as gently as possible. When the rays fell upon his face, he breathed hard; he opened his eyes. Leaning over his body, I tried to smile at him. He closed his eyelids again; I understood by his trembling lips that he was conscious of his sufferings.

"It's you, Gourdon," he said to me at last, in a feeble voice; "is the

battle won?"

"I think so, colonel," I answered him.

There was a moment of silence. Then, opening his eyes and looking at me, he inquired--

"Where are you wounded?"

"In the shoulder--and you, colonel?"

"My elbow must be smashed. I remember; it was the same bullet that arranged us both like this, my boy."

He made an effort to sit up.

"But come," he said with sudden gaiety, "we are not going to sleep here?"

You cannot believe how much this courageous display of joviality contributed towards giving me strength and hope. I felt quite different since we were two to struggle against death.

"Wait," I exclaimed, "I will bandage up your arm with my handkerchief, and we will try and support one another as far as the nearest ambulance."

"That's it, my boy. Don't make it too tight. Now, let us take each other by the good hand and try to get up."

We rose staggering. We had lost a great deal of blood; our heads were swimming and our legs failed us. Any one would have mistaken us for drunkards, stumbling, supporting, pushing one another, and making zigzags to avoid the dead. The sun was setting with a rosy blush, and our gigantic shadows danced in a strange way over the field of battle. It was the end of a fine day.

The colonel joked; his lips were crisped by shudders, his laughter resembled sobs. I could see that we were going to fall down in some corner never to rise again. At times we were seized with giddiness, and were obliged to stop and close our eyes. The ambulances formed small grey patches on the dark ground at the extremity of the plain.

We knocked up against a large stone, and were thrown down one on the other. The colonel swore like a pagan. We tried to walk on all-fours, catching hold of the briars. In this way we did a hundred yards on our knees. But our knees were bleeding.

"I have had enough of it," said the colonel, lying down; "they may come and fetch me if they will. Let us sleep."

I still had the strength to sit half up, and shout with all the breath that remained within me. Men were passing along in the distance picking up the wounded; they ran to us and placed us side by side on a stretcher.

"Comrade," the colonel said to me during the journey, "Death will not have us. I owe you my life; I will pay my debt, whenever you have need of me. Give me your hand."

I placed my hand in his, and it was thus that we reached the ambulances. They had lighted torches; the surgeons were cutting and sawing, amidst frightful yells; a sickly smell came from the blood-stained linen, whilst the torches cast dark rosy flakes into the basins.

The colonel bore the amputation of his arm with courage; I only saw his lips turn pale and a film come over his eyes. When it was my turn, a surgeon examined my shoulder.

"A shell did that for you," he said; "an inch lower and your shoulder would have been carried away. The flesh, only, has suffered."

And when I asked the assistant, who was dressing my wound, whether it was serious, he answered me with a laugh:

"Serious! you will have to keep to your bed for three weeks, and make new blood."

I turned my face to the wall, not wishing to show my tears. And with my heart's eyes I perceived Babet and my uncle Lazare stretching out their arms towards me. I had finished with the sanguinary struggles of my summer day.

III

AUTUMN

It was nearly fifteen years since I had married Babet in my uncle Lazare's little church. We had sought happiness in our dear valley. I had made myself a farmer; the Durance, my first sweetheart, was now a good mother to me, who seemed to take pleasure in making my fields rich and fertile. Little by little, by following the new methods of agriculture, I became one of the wealthiest landowners in the neighbourhood.

We had purchased the oak-tree walk and the meadows bordering on the river, at the death of my wife's parents. I had had a modest house built on this land, but we were soon obliged to enlarge it; each year I found a means of rounding off our property by the addition of some neighbouring field, and our granaries were too small for our harvests.

Those first fifteen years were uneventful and happy. They passed away in

serene joy, and all they have left within me is the remembrance of calm and continued happiness. My uncle Lazare, on retiring to our home, had realised his dream; his advanced age did not permit of his reading his breviary of a morning; he sometimes regretted his dear church, but consoled himself by visiting the young vicar who had succeeded him. He came down from the little room he occupied at sunrise, and often accompanied me to the fields, enjoying himself in the open air, and finding a second youth amidst the healthy atmosphere of the country.

One sadness alone made us sometimes sigh. Amidst the fruitfulness by which we were surrounded, Babet remained childless. Although we were three to love one another we sometimes found ourselves too much alone; we would have liked to have had a little fair head running about amongst us, who would have tormented and caressed us.

Uncle Lazare had a frightful dread of dying before he was a great-uncle. He had become a child again, and felt sorrowful that Babet did not give him a comrade who would have played with him. On the day when my wife confided to us with hesitation, that we would no doubt soon be four, I saw my uncle turn quite pale, and make efforts not to cry. He kissed us, thinking already of the christening, and speaking of the child as if it were already three or four years old.

And the months passed in concentrated tenderness. We talked together in subdued voices, awaiting some one. I no longer loved Babet: I worshipped her with joined hands; I worshipped her for two, for herself and the little one.

The great day was drawing nigh. I had brought a midwife from Grenoble who never moved from the farm. My uncle was in a dreadful fright; he understood nothing about such things; he went so far as to tell me that he had done wrong in taking holy orders, and that he was very sorry he was not a doctor.

One morning in September, at about six o'clock, I went into the room of my dear Babet, who was still asleep. Her smiling face was peacefully reposing on the white linen pillow-case. I bent over her, holding my breath. Heaven had blessed me with the good things of this world. I all at once thought of that summer day when I was moaning in the dust, and at the same time I felt around me the comfort due to labour and the quietude that comes from happiness. My good wife was asleep, all rosy, in the middle of her great bed; whilst the whole room recalled to me our fifteen years of tender affection.

I kissed Babet softly on the lips. She opened her eyes and smiled at me without speaking. I felt an almost uncontrollable desire to take her in my arms, and clasp her to my heart; but, latterly, I had hardly dared press her hand, she seemed so fragile and sacred to me.

I seated myself at the edge of the bed, and asked her in a low voice:

"Is it for to-day?"

"No, I don't think so," she replied. "I dreamt I had a boy: he was already very tall and wore adorable little black moustachios. Uncle Lazare told me yesterday that he also had seen him in a dream."

I acted very stupidly.

"I know the child better than you do," I said. "I see it every night. It's a girl----"

And as Babet turned her face to the wall, ready to cry, I realised how foolish I had been, and hastened to add:

"When I say a girl--I am not quite sure. I see a very small child with a long white gown.--it's certainly a boy."

Babet kissed me for that pleasing remark.

"Go and look after the vintage," she continued, "I feel calm this morning."

"You will send for me if anything happens?"

"Yes, yes, I am very tired: I shall go to sleep again. You'll not be angry with me for my laziness?"

And Babet closed her eyes, looking languid and affected. I remained leaning over her, receiving the warm breath from her lips in my face. She gradually went off to sleep, without ceasing to smile. Then I disengaged my hand from hers with a multitude of precautions. I had to manoeuvre for five minutes to bring this delicate task to a happy issue. After that I gave her a kiss on her forehead, which she did not feel, and withdrew with a palpitating heart, overflowing with love.

In the courtyard below, I found my uncle Lazare, who was gazing anxiously at the window of Babet's room. So soon as he perceived me he inquired:

"Well, is it for to-day?"

He had been putting this question to me regularly every morning for the past month.

"It appears not," I answered him. "Will you come with me and see them picking the grapes?"

He fetched his stick, and we went down the oak-tree walk. When we were at

the end of it, on that terrace which overlooks the Durance, both of us stopped, gazing at the valley.

Small white clouds floated in the pale sky. The sun was shedding soft rays, which cast a sort of gold dust over the country, the yellow expanse of which spread out all ripe. One saw neither the brilliant light nor the dark shadows of summer. The foliage gilded the black earth in large patches. The river ran more slowly, weary at the task of having rendered the fields fruitful for a season. And the valley remained calm and strong. It already wore the first furrows of winter, but it preserved within it the warmth of its last labour, displaying its robust charms, free from the weeds of spring, more majestically beautiful, like that second youth, of woman who has given birth to life.

My uncle Lazare remained silent; then, turning towards me, said:

"Do you remember, Jean? It is more than twenty years ago since I brought you here early one May morning. On that particular day I showed you the valley full of feverish activity, labouring for the fruits of autumn. Look; the valley has just performed its task again."

"I remember, dear uncle," I replied. "I was quaking with fear on that day; but you were good, and your lesson was convincing. I owe you all my happiness."

"Yes, you have reached the autumn. You have laboured and are gathering in the harvest. Man, my boy, was created after the way of the earth. And we, like the common mother, are eternal: the green leaves are born again each year from dry leaves; I am born again in you, and you will be born again in your children. I am telling you this so that old age may not alarm you, so that you may know how to die in peace, as dies this verdure, which will shoot out again from its own germs next spring."

I listened to my uncle and thought of Babet, who was sleeping in her great bed spread with white linen. The dear creature was about to give birth to a child after the manner of this fertile soil which had given us fortune. She also had reached the autumn: she had the beaming smile and serene robustness of the valley. I seemed to see her beneath the yellow sun, tired and happy, experiencing noble delight at being a mother. And I no longer knew whether my uncle Lazare was talking to me of my dear valley, or of my dear Babet.

We slowly ascended the hills. Below, along the Durance, were the meadows, broad, raw green swards; next came the yellow fields, intersected here and there by greyish olive and slender almond trees, planted wide apart in rows; then, right up above, were the vines, great stumps with shoots trailing along the ground.

The vine is treated in the south of France like a hardy housewife, and not

like a delicate young lady, as in the north. It grows somewhat as it likes, according to the good will of rain and sun. The stumps, which are planted in double rows, and form long lines, throw sprays of dark verdure around them. Wheat or oats are sown between. A vineyard resembles an immense piece of striped material, made of the green bands formed by the vine leaves, and of yellow ribbon represented by the stubble.

Men and women stooping down among the vines, were cutting the bunches of grapes, which they then threw to the bottom of large baskets. My uncle and I walked slowly through the stubble. As we passed along, the vintagers turned their heads and greeted us. My uncle sometimes stopped to speak to some of the oldest of the labourers.

"Heh! Father André," he said, "are the grapes thoroughly ripe? Will the wine be good this year?"

And the countryfolk, raising their bare arms, displayed the long bunches, which were as black as ink, in the sun; and when the grapes were pressed they seemed to burst with abundance and strength.

"Look, Mr. Curé," they exclaimed, "these are small ones. There are some weighing several pounds. We have not had such a task these ten years."

Then they returned among the leaves. Their brown jackets formed patches in the verdure. And the women, bareheaded, with small blue handkerchiefs round their necks, were stooping down singing. There were children rolling in the sun, in the stubble, giving utterance to shrill laughter and enlivening this open-air workshop with their turbulence. Large carts remained motionless at the edge of the field waiting for the grapes; they stood out prominently against the clear sky, whilst men went and came unceasingly, carrying away full baskets, and bringing back empty ones.

I confess that in the centre of this field, I had feelings of pride. I heard the ground producing beneath my feet; ripe age ran all powerful in the veins of the vine, and loaded the air with great puffs of it. Hot blood coursed in my flesh, I was as if elevated by the fecundity overflowing from the soil and ascending within me. The labour of this swarm of work-people was my doing, these vines were my children; this entire farm became my large and obedient family. I experienced pleasure in feeling my feet sink into the heavy land.

Then, at a glance, I took in the fields that sloped down to the Durance, and I was the possessor of those vines, those meadows, that stubble, those olive-trees. The house stood all white beside the oak-tree walk; the river seemed like a fringe of silver placed at the edge of the great green mantle of my pasture-land. I fancied, for a moment, that my frame was increasing in size, that by stretching out my arms, I would be able to embrace the entire property, and press it to my breast, trees, meadows, house, and ploughed land.

And as I looked, I saw one of our servant-girls racing, out of breath, up the narrow pathway that ascended the hill. Confused by the speed at which she was travelling, she stumbled over the stones, agitating both her arms, and hailing us with gestures of bewilderment. I felt choking with inexpressible emotion.

"Uncle, uncle," I shouted, "look how Marguerite's running. I think it must be for to-day."

My uncle Lazare turned quite pale. The servant had at length reached the plateau; she came towards us jumping over the vines. When she reached me, she was out of breath; she was stifling and pressing her hands to her bosom.

"Speak!" I said to her. "What has happened?"

She heaved a heavy sigh, agitated her hands, and finally was able to pronounce this single word:

"Madame----"

I waited for no more.

"Come! come quick, uncle Lazare! Ah! my poor dear Babet!"

And I bounded down the pathway at a pace fit to break my bones. The vintagers, who had stood up, smiled as they saw me running. Uncle Lazare, who could not overtake me, shook his walking stick in despair.

"Heh! Jean, the deuce!" he shouted, "wait for me. I don't want to be the last."

But I no longer heard Uncle Lazare, and continued running.

I reached the farm panting for breath, full of hope and terror. I rushed upstairs and knocked with my fist at Babet's door, laughing, crying, and half crazy. The midwife set the door ajar, to tell me in an angry voice not to make so much noise. I stood there abashed and in despair.

"You can't come in," she added. "Go and wait in the courtyard."

And as I did not move, she continued: "All is going on very well. I will call you."

The door was closed. I remained standing before it, unable to make up my mind to go away. I heard Babet complaining in a broken voice. And, while I was there, she gave utterance to a heartrending scream that struck me right in the breast like a bullet. I felt an almost irresistible desire to

break the door open with my shoulder. So as not to give way to it, I placed my hands to my ears, and dashed downstairs.

In the courtyard I found my uncle Lazare, who had just arrived out of breath. The worthy man was obliged to seat himself on the brink of the well.

"Hallo! where is the child?" he inquired of me.

"I don't know," I answered; "they shut the door in my face--Babet is in pain and in tears." We gazed at one another, not daring to utter a word. We listened in agony, without taking our eyes off Babet's window, endeavouring to see through the little white curtains. My uncle, who was trembling, stood still, with both his hands resting heavily on his walking-stick; I, feeling very feverish, walked up and down before him, taking long strides. At times we exchanged anxious smiles.

The carts of the vintagers arrived one by one. The baskets of grapes were placed against a wall of the courtyard, and bare-legged men trampled the bunches under foot in wooden troughs. The mules neighed, the carters swore, whilst the wine fell with a dull sound to the bottom of the vat. Acrid smells pervaded the warm air.

And I continued pacing up and down, as if made tipsy by those perfumes. My poor head was breaking, and as I watched the red juice run from the grapes I thought of Babet. I said to myself with manly joy, that my child was born at the prolific time of vintage, amidst the perfume of new wine.

I was tormented by impatience, I went upstairs again. But I did not dare knock, I pressed my ear against the door, and heard Babet's low moans and sobs. Then my heart failed me, and I cursed suffering. Uncle Lazare, who had crept up behind me, had to lead me back into the courtyard. He wished to divert me, and told me the wine would be excellent; but he spoke without attending to what he said. And at times we were both silent, listening anxiously to one of Babet's more prolonged moans.

Little by little the cries subsided, and became nothing more than a painful murmur, like the voice of a child falling off to sleep in tears. Then there was absolute silence. This soon caused me unutterable terror. The house seemed empty, now that Babet had ceased sobbing. I was just going upstairs, when the midwife opened the window noiselessly. She leant out and beckoned me with her hand:

"Come," she said to me.

I went slowly upstairs, feeling additional delight at each step I took. My uncle Lazare was already knocking at the door, whilst I was only half way up to the landing, experiencing a sort of strange delight in delaying the moment when I would kiss my wife.

I stopped on the threshold, my heart was beating double. My uncle had leant over the cradle. Babet, quite pale, with closed eyelids, seemed asleep. I forgot all about the child, and going straight to Babet, took her dear hand between mine. The tears had not dried on her cheeks, and her quivering lips were dripping with them. She raised her eyelids wearily. She did not speak to me, but I understood her to say: "I have suffered a great deal, my dear Jean, but I was so happy to suffer! I felt you within me."

Then I bent down, I kissed Babet's eyes and drank her tears. She laughed with much sweetness; she resigned herself with caressing languidness. The fatigue had made her all aches and pains. She slowly moved her hands from the sheet, and taking me by the neck placed her lips to my ear:

"It's a boy," she murmured in a weak voice, but with an air of triumph.

Those were the first words she uttered after the terrible shock she had undergone.

"I knew it would be a boy," she continued, "I saw the child every night. Give him me, put him beside me."

I turned round and saw the midwife and my uncle quarrelling.

The midwife had all the trouble in the world to prevent uncle Lazare taking the little one in his arms. He wanted to nurse it.

I looked at the child whom the mother had made me forget. He was all rosy. Babet said with conviction that he was like me; the midwife discovered that he had his mother's eyes; I, for my part, could not say, I was almost crying, I smothered the dear little thing with kisses, imagining I was still kissing Babet.

I placed the child on the bed. He kept on crying, but this sounded to us like celestial music. I sat on the edge of the bed, my uncle took a large arm-chair, and Babet, weary and serene, covered up to her chin, remained with open eyelids and smiling eyes.

The window was wide open. The smell of grapes came in along with the warmth of the mild autumn afternoon. One heard the trampling of the vintagers, the shocks of the carts, the cracking of whips; at times the shrill song of a servant working in the courtyard reached us. All this noise was softened in the serenity of that room, which still resounded with Babet's sobs. And the window-frame enclosed a large strip of landscape, carved out of the heavens and open country. We could see the oak-tree walk in its entire length; then the Durance, looking like a white satin ribbon, passed amidst the gold and purple leaves; whilst above this square of ground were the limpid depths of a pale sky with blue and rosy

tints.

It was amidst the calm of this horizon, amidst the exhalations of the vat and the joys attendant upon labour and reproduction, that we three talked together, Babet, uncle Lazare, and myself, whilst gazing at the dear little new-born babe.

"Uncle Lazare," said Babet, "what name will you give the child?"

"Jean's mother was named Jacqueline," answered my uncle. "I shall call the child Jacques."

"Jacques, Jacques," repeated Babet. "Yes, it's a pretty name. And, tell me, what shall we make the little man: parson or soldier, gentleman or peasant?"

I began to laugh.

"We shall have time to think of that," I said.

"But no," continued Babet almost angry, "he will grow rapidly. See how strong he is. He already speaks with his eyes."

My uncle Lazare was exactly of my wife's opinion. He answered in a very grave tone:

"Make him neither priest nor soldier, unless he have an irresistible inclination for one of those callings--to make him a gentleman would be a serious----"

Babet looked at me anxiously. The dear creature had not a bit of pride for herself; but, like all mothers, she would have liked to be humble and proud before her son. I could have sworn that she already saw him a notary or a doctor. I kissed her and gently said to her:

"I wish our son to live in our dear valley. One day, he will find a Babet of sixteen, on the banks of the Durance, to whom he will give some water. Do you remember, my dear----? The country has brought us peace: our son shall be a peasant as we are, and happy as we are."

Babet, who was quite touched, kissed me in her turn. She gazed at the foliage and the river, the meadows and the sky, through the window; then she said to me, smiling:

"You are right, Jean. This place has been good to us, it will be the same to our little Jacques. Uncle Lazare, you will be the godfather of a farmer."

Uncle Lazare made a languid, affectionate sign of approval with the head.

I had been examining him for a moment, and saw his eyes becoming filmy, and his lips turning pale. Leaning back in the arm-chair, opposite the window, he had placed his white hands on his knees, and was watching the heavens fixedly with an expression of thoughtful ecstasy.

I felt very anxious.

"Are you in pain, uncle Lazare?" I inquired of him, "What is the matter with you? Answer, for mercy's sake."

He gently raised one of his hands, as if to beg me to speak lower; then he let it fall again, and said in a weak voice:

"I am broken down," he said. "Happiness, at my age, is mortal. Don't make a noise. It seems as if my flesh were becoming quite light: I can no longer feel my legs or arms."

Babet raised herself in alarm, with her eyes on uncle Lazare. I knelt down before him, watching him anxiously. He smiled.

"Don't be frightened," he resumed. "I am in no pain; a feeling of calmness is gaining possession of me; I believe I am going off into a good and just sleep. It came over me all at once, and I thank the Almighty. Ah! my poor Jean, I ran too fast down, the pathway on the hillside; the child caused me too great joy."

And as we understood, we burst out into tears. Uncle Lazare continued, without ceasing to watch the sky:

"Do not spoil my joy, I beg of you. If you only knew how happy it makes me, to fall asleep for ever in this armchair! I have never dared expect such a consoling death. All I love is here, beside me--and see what a blue sky! The Almighty has sent a lovely evening."

The sun was sinking behind the oak-tree walk. Its slanting rays cast sheets of gold beneath the trees, which took the tones of old copper. The verdant fields melted into vague serenity in the distance. Uncle Lazare became weaker and weaker amidst the touching silence of this peaceful sunset, entering by the open window. He slowly passed away, like those slight gleams that were dying out on the lofty branches.

"Ah! my good valley," he murmured, "you are sending me a tender farewell. I was afraid of coming to my end in the winter, when you would be all black."

We restrained our tears, not wishing to trouble this saintly death. Babet prayed in an undertone. The child continued uttering smothered cries.

My uncle Lazare heard its wail in the dreaminess of his agony. He

endeavoured to turn towards Babet, and, still smiling, said:

"I have seen the child and die very happy."

Then he gazed at the pale sky and yellow fields, and, throwing back his head, heaved a gentle sigh.

No tremor agitated uncle Lazare's body; he died as one falls asleep.

We had become so calm that we remained silent and with dry eyes. In the presence of such great simplicity in death, all we experienced was a feeling of serene sadness. Twilight had set in, uncle Lazare's farewell had left us confident, like the farewell of the sun which dies at night to be born again in the morning.

Such was my autumn day, which gave me a son, and carried off my uncle Lazare in the peacefulness of the twilight.

IV

WINTER

There are dreadful mornings in January that chill one's heart. I awoke on this particular day with a vague feeling of anxiety. It had thawed during the night, and when I cast my eyes over the country from the threshold, it looked to me like an immense dirty grey rag, soiled with mud and rent to tatters.

The horizon was shrouded in a curtain of fog, in which the oak-trees along the walk lugubriously extended their dark arms, like a row of spectres guarding the vast mass of vapour spreading out behind them. The fields had sunk, and were covered with great sheets of water, at the edge of which hung the remnants of dirty snow. The loud roar of the Durance was increasing in the distance.

Winter imparts health and strength to one's frame when the sun is clear and the ground dry. The air makes the tips of your ears tingle, you walk merrily along the frozen pathways, which ring with a silvery sound beneath your tread. But I know of nothing more saddening than dull, thawing weather: I hate the damp fogs which weigh one's shoulders down.

I shivered in the presence of that copper-like sky, and hastened to retire indoors, making up my mind that I would not go out into the fields that day. There was plenty of work in and around the farm-buildings.

Jacques had been up a long time. I heard him whistling in a shed, where he was helping some men remove sacks of corn. The boy was already eighteen years old; he was a tall fellow, with strong arms. He had not had an uncle Lazare to spoil him and teach him Latin, and he did not go and dream

beneath the willows at the riverside. Jacques had become a real peasant, an untiring worker, who got angry when I touched anything, telling me I was getting old and ought to rest.

And as I was watching him from a distance, a sweet lithe creature, leaping on my shoulders, clapped her little hands to my eyes, inquiring:

"Who is it?"

I laughed and answered:

"It's little Marie, who has just been dressed by her mamma."

The dear little girl was completing her tenth year, and for ten years she had been the delight of the farm. Having come the last, at a time when we could no longer hope to have any more children, she was doubly loved. Her precarious health made her particularly dear to us. She was treated as a young lady; her mother absolutely wanted to make a lady of her, and I had not the heart to oppose her wish, so little Marie was a pet, in lovely silk skirts trimmed with ribbons.

Marie was still seated on my shoulders.

"Mamma, mamma," she cried, "come and look; I'm playing at horses."

Babet, who was entering, smiled. Ah! my poor Babet, how old we were! I remember we were shivering with weariness, on that day, gazing sadly at one another when alone.

Our children brought back our youth.

Lunch was eaten in silence. We had been compelled to light the lamp. The reddish glimmer that hung round the room was sad enough to drive one crazy.

"Bah!" said Jacques, "this tepid rainy weather is better than intense cold that would freeze our vines and olives."

And he tried to joke. But he was as anxious as we were, without knowing why. Babet had had bad dreams. We listened to the account of her nightmare, laughing with our lips but sad at heart.

"This weather quite upsets one," I said to cheer us all up.

"Yes, yes, it's the weather," Jacques hastened to add. "I'll put some vine branches on the fire."

There was a bright flame which cast large sheets of light upon the walls. The branches burnt with a cracking sound, leaving rosy ashes. We had

seated ourselves in front of the chimney; the air, outside, was tepid; but great drops of icy cold damp fell from the ceilings inside the farmhouse. Babet had taken little Marie on her knees; she was talking to her in an undertone, amused at her childish chatter.

"Are you coming, father?" Jacques inquired of me. "We are going to look at the cellars and lofts."

I went out with him. The harvests had been getting bad for some years past. We were suffering great losses: our vines and trees were caught by frost, whilst hail had chopped up our wheat and oats. And I sometimes said that I was growing old, and that fortune, who is a woman, does not care for old men. Jacques laughed, answering that he was young, and was going to court fortune.

I had reached the winter, the cold season. I felt distinctly that all was withering around me. At each pleasure that departed, I thought of uncle Lazare, who had died so calmly; and with fond remembrances of him, asked for strength.

Daylight had completely disappeared at three o'clock. We went down into the common room. Babet was sewing in the chimney corner, with her head bent over her work; and little Marie was seated on the ground, in front of the fire, gravely dressing a doll. Jacques and I had placed ourselves at a mahogany writing-table, which had come to us from uncle Lazare, and were engaged in checking our accounts.

The window was as if blocked up; the fog, sticking to the panes of glass, formed a perfect wall of gloom. Behind this wall stretched emptiness, the unknown. A great noise, a loud roar, alone arose in the silence and spread through the obscurity.

We had dismissed the workpeople, keeping only our old woman-servant, Marguerite, with us. When I raised my head and listened, it seemed to me that the farmhouse hung suspended in the middle of a chasm. No human sound came from the outside. I heard naught but the riot of the abyss. Then I gazed at my wife and children, and experienced the cowardice of those old people who feel themselves too weak to protect those surrounding them against unknown peril.

The noise became harsher, and it seemed to us that there was a knocking at the door. At the same instant, the horses in the stable began to neigh furiously, whilst the cattle lowed as if choking. We had all risen, pale with anxiety, Jacques dashed to the door and threw it wide open.

A wave of muddy water burst into the room.

The Durance was overflowing. It was it that had been making the noise, that had been increasing in the distance since morning. The snow melting

on the mountains had transformed each hillside into a torrent which had swelled the river. The curtain of fog had hidden from us this sudden rise of water.

It had often advanced thus to the gates of the farm, when the thaw came after severe winters. But the flood had never increased so rapidly. We could see through the open door that the courtyard was transformed into a lake. The water already reached our ankles.

Babet had caught up little Marie, who was crying and clasping her doll to her. Jacques wanted to run and open the doors of the stables and cowhouses; but his mother held him back by his clothes, begging him not to go out. The water continued rising. I pushed Babet towards the staircase.

"Quick, quick, let us go up into the bedrooms," I cried.

And I obliged Jacques to pass before me. I left the ground-floor the last.

Marguerite came down in terror from the loft where she happened to find herself. I made her sit down at the end of the room beside Babet, who remained silent, pale, and with beseeching eyes. We put little Marie into bed; she had insisted on keeping her doll, and went quietly to sleep pressing it in her arms. This child's sleep relieved me; when I turned round and saw Babet, listening to the little girl's regular breathing, I forgot the danger, all I heard was the water beating against the walls.

But Jacques and I could not help looking the peril in the face. Anxiety made us endeavour to discover the progress of the inundation. We had thrown the window wide open, we leant out at the risk of falling, searching into the darkness. The fog, which was thicker, hung above the flood, throwing out fine rain which gave us the shivers. Vague steel-like flashes were all that showed the moving sheet of water, amidst the profound obscurity. Below, it was splashing in the courtyard, rising along the walls in gentle undulations. And we still heard naught but the anger of the Durance, and the affrighted cattle and horses.

The neighing and lowing of these poor beasts pierced me to the heart. Jacques questioned me with his eyes; he would have liked to try and deliver them. Their agonising moans soon became lamentable, and a great cracking sound was heard. The oxen had just broken down the stable doors. We saw them pass before us, borne away by the flood, rolled over and over in the current. And they disappeared amid the roar of the river.

Then I felt choking with anger. I became as one possessed, I shook my fist at the Durance. Erect, facing the window, I insulted it.

"Wicked thing!" I shouted amidst the tumult of the waters, "I loved you fondly, you were my first sweetheart, and now you are plundering me. You come and disturb my farm, and carry off my cattle. Ah! cursed, cursed

thing.----Then you gave me Babet, you ran gently at the edge of my meadows. I took you for a good mother. I remembered uncle Lazare felt affection for your limpid stream, and I thought I owed you gratitude. You are a barbarous mother, I only owe you my hatred----"

But the Durance stifled my cries with its thundering voice; and, broad and indifferent, expanded and drove its flood onward with tranquil obstinacy.

I turned back to the room and went and kissed Babet, who was weeping. Little Marie was smiling in her sleep.

"Don't be afraid," I said to my wife. "The water cannot always rise. It will certainly go down. There is no danger."

"No, there is no danger," Jacques repeated feverishly. "The house is solid."

At that moment Marguerite, who had approached the window, tormented by that feeling of curiosity which is the outcome of fear, leant forward like a mad thing and fell, uttering a cry. I threw myself before the window, but could not prevent Jacques plunging into the water. Marguerite had nursed him, and he felt the tenderness of a son for the poor old woman. Babet had risen in terror, with joined hands, at the sound of the two splashes. She remained there, erect, with open mouth and distended eyes, watching the window.

I had seated myself on the wooden handrail, and my ears were ringing with the roar of the flood. I do not know how long it was that Babet and I were in this painful state of stupor, when a voice called to me. It was Jacques who was holding on to the wall beneath the window. I stretched out my hand to him, and he clambered up.

Babet clasped him in her arms. She could sob now; and she relieved herself.

No reference was made to Marguerite. Jacques did not dare say he had been unable to find her, and we did not dare question him anent his search.

He took me apart and brought me back to the window.

"Father," he said to me in an undertone, "there are more than seven feet of water in the courtyard, and the river is still rising. We cannot remain here any longer."

Jacques was right. The house was falling to pieces, the planks of the outbuildings were going away one by one. Then this death of Marguerite weighed upon us. Babet, bewildered, was beseeching us. Marie alone remained peaceful in the big bed? with her doll between her arms, and slumbering with the happy smile of an angel.

The peril increased at every minute. The water was on the point of reaching the handrail of the window and pouring into the room. Any one would have said that it was an engine of war making the farmhouse totter with regular, dull, hard blows. The current must be running right against the facade, and we could not hope for any human assistance.

"Every minute is precious," said Jacques in agony. "We shall be crushed beneath the ruins. Let us look for boards, let us make a raft."

He said that in his excitement. I would naturally have preferred a thousand times to be in the middle of the river, on a few beams lashed together, than beneath the roof of this house which was about to fall in. But where could we lay hands on the beams we required? In a rage I tore the planks from the cupboards, Jacques broke the furniture, we took away the shutters, every piece of wood we could reach. And feeling it was impossible to utilise these fragments, we cast them into the middle of the room in a fury, and continued searching.

Our last hope was departing, we understood our misery and want of power. The water was rising; the harsh voice of the Durance was calling to us in anger. Then, I burst out sobbing, I took Babet in my trembling arms, I begged Jacques to come near us. I wished us all to die in the same embrace.

Jacques had returned to the window. And, suddenly, he exclaimed:

"Father, we are saved!--Come and see."

The sky was clear. The roof of a shed, torn away by the current, had come to a standstill beneath our window. This roof, which was several yards broad, was formed of light beams and thatch; it floated, and would make a capital raft, I joined my hands together and would have worshipped this wood and straw.

Jacques jumped on the roof, after having firmly secured it. He walked on the thatch, making sure it was everywhere strong. The thatch resisted; therefore we could adventure on it without fear.

"Oh! it will carry us all very well," said Jacques joyfully. "See how little it sinks into the water! The difficulty will be to steer it."

He looked around him and seized two poles drifting along in the current, as they passed by.

"Ah! here are oars," he continued. "You will go to the stern, father, and I forward, and we will manoeuvre the raft easily. There are not twelve feet of water. Quick, quick! get on board, we must not lose a minute."

My poor Babet tried to smile. She wrapped little Marie carefully up in her shawl; the child had just woke up, and, quite alarmed, maintained a silence which was broken by deep sobs. I placed a chair before the window and made Babet get on the raft. As I held her in my arms I kissed her with poignant emotion, feeling this kiss was the last.

The water was beginning to pour into the room. Our feet were soaking. I was the last to embark; then I undid the cord. The current hurled us against the wall; it required precautions and many efforts to quit the farmhouse.

The fog had little by little dispersed. It was about midnight when we left. The stars were still buried in mist; the moon which was almost at the edge of the horizon, lit up the night with a sort of wan daylight.

The inundation then appeared to us in all its grandiose horror. The valley had become a river. The Durance, swollen to enormous proportions and washing the two hillsides, passed between dark masses of cultivated land, and was the sole thing displaying life in the inanimate space bounded by the horizon. It thundered with a sovereign voice, maintaining in its anger the majesty of its colossal wave. Clumps of trees emerged in places, staining the sheet of pale water with black streaks. Opposite us I recognised the tops of the oaks along the walk; the current carried us towards these branches, which for us were so many reefs. Around the raft floated various kinds of remains, pieces of wood, empty barrels, bundles of grass; the river was bearing along the ruins it had made in its anger.

To the left we perceived the lights of Dourgues--flashes of lanterns moving about in the darkness. The water could not have risen as high as the village; only the low land had been submerged. No doubt assistance would come. We searched the patches of light hanging over the water; it seemed to us at every instant that we heard the sound of oars.

We had started at random. As soon as the raft was in the middle of the current, lost amidst the whirlpools of the river, anguish of mind overtook us again; we almost regretted having left the farm. I sometimes turned round and gazed at the house, which still remained standing, presenting a grey aspect on the white water. Babet, crouching down in the centre of the raft, in the thatch of the roof, was holding little Marie on her knees, the child's head against her breast, to hide the horror of the river from her. Both were bent double, leaning forward in an embrace, as if reduced in stature by fear. Jacques, standing upright in the front, was leaning on his pole with all his weight; from time to time he cast a rapid glance towards us, and then silently resumed his task. I seconded him as well as I could, but our efforts to reach the bank remained fruitless. Little by little, notwithstanding our poles, which we buried into the mud until we nearly broke them, we drifted into the open; a force that seemed to come from the depths of the water drove us away. The Durance was slowly taking possession of us.

Struggling, bathed in perspiration, we had worked ourselves into a passion; we were fighting with the river as with a living being, seeking to vanquish, wound, kill it. It strained us in its giant-like arms, and our poles in our hands became weapons which we thrust into its breast. It roared, flung its slaver into our faces, wriggled beneath our strokes. We resisted its victory with clenched teeth. We would not be conquered. And we had mad impulses to fell the monster, to calm it with blows from our fists.

We went slowly towards the offing. We were already at the entrance to the oak-tree walk. The dark branches pierced through the water, which they tore with a lamentable sound. Death, perhaps, awaited us there in a collision. I cried out to Jacques to follow the walk by clinging close to the branches. And it was thus that I passed for the last time in the middle of this oak-tree alley, where I had walked in my youth and ripe age. In the terrible darkness, above the howling depth, I thought of uncle Lazare, and saw the happy days of my youth smiling at me sadly.

The Durance triumphed at the end of the alley. Our poles no longer touched the bottom. The water bore us along in its impetuous bound of victory. And now it could do what it pleased with us. We gave ourselves up. We went downstream with frightful rapidity. Great clouds, dirty tattered rags hung about the sky; when the moon was hidden there came lugubrious obscurity. Then we rolled in chaos. Enormous billows as black as ink, resembling the backs of fish, bore us along, spinning us round. I could no longer see either Babet or the children. I already felt myself dying.

I know not how long this last run lasted. The moon was suddenly unveiled, and the horizon became clear. And in that light I perceived an immense black mass in front of us which blocked the way, and towards which we were being carried with all the violence of the current. We were lost, we would be broken there.

Babet had stood upright. She held out little Marie to me:

"Take the child," she exclaimed. "Leave me alone, leave me alone!"

Jacques had already caught Babet in his arms. In a loud voice he said:

"Father, save the little one--I will save mother."

We had come close to the black mass. I thought I recognised a tree. The shock was terrible, and the raft, split in two, scattered its straw and beams in the whirlpool of water.

I fell, clasping little Marie tightly to me. The icy cold water brought back all my courage. On rising to the surface of the river, I supported the child, I half laid her on my neck and began to swim laboriously. If

the little creature had not lost consciousness but had struggled, we should both have remained at the bottom of the deep.

And, whilst I swam, I felt choking with anxiety. I called Jacques, I tried to see in the distance; but I heard nothing save the roar of the waters, I saw naught but the pale sheet of the Durance. Jacques and Babet were at the bottom. She must have clung to him, dragged him down in a deadly strain of her arms. What frightful agony! I wanted to die; I sunk slowly, I was going to find them beneath the black water. And as soon as the flood touched little Marie's face, I struggled again with impetuous anguish to get near the waterside.

It was thus that I abandoned Babet and Jacques, in despair at having been unable to die with them, still calling out to them in a husky voice. The river cast me on the stones, like one of those bundles of grass it leaves on its way. When I came to myself again, I took my daughter, who was opening her eyes, in my arms. Day was breaking. My winter night was at an end, that terrible night which had been an accomplice in the murder of my wife and son.

At this moment, after years of regret, one last consolation remains to me. I am the icy winter, but I feel the approaching spring stirring within me. As my uncle Lazare said, we never die. I have had four seasons, and here I am returning to the spring, there is my dear Marie commencing the everlasting joys and sorrows over again.

ACAJOU AND ZIRPHILE.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Curiosities of Literature*, Vol. II (of 3)
by Isaac Disraeli

As a literary curiosity, and as a supplemental anecdote to the article of PREFACES,[173] I cannot pass over the suppressed preface to the "Acajou et Zirphile" of Du Clos, which of itself is almost a singular instance of hardy ingenuity, in an address to the public.

This single volume is one of the most whimsical of fairy tales, and an amusing satire originating in an odd circumstance. Count Tessin, the Swedish Ambassador at the Court of France, had a number of grotesque designs made by Boucher, the king's painter, and engraved by the first artists. The last plate had just been finished when the Count was recalled, and appointed Prime Minister and Governor to the Crown Prince, a place he filled with great honour; and in emulation of Fenelon, composed letters on the education of a Prince, which have been translated. He left behind him in France all the plates in the hands of Boucher, who, having shown them to Du Clos for their singular invention, regretted that he had bestowed so much fancy on a fairy tale, which was

not to be had; Du Clos, to relieve his regrets, offered to invent a tale to correspond with these grotesque subjects. This seemed not a little difficult. In the first plate, the author appears in his morning-gown, writing in his study, surrounded by apes, rats, butterflies, and smoke. In another, a Prince is drest in the French costume of 1740, strolling full of thought "in the shady walk of ideas." In a third plate, the Prince is conversing with a fairy who rises out of a gooseberry which he has plucked: two dwarfs, discovered in another gooseberry, give a sharp fillip to the Prince, who seems much embarrassed by their tiny maliciousness. In another walk he eats an apricot, which opens with the most beautiful of faces, a little melancholy, and leaning on one side. In another print, he finds the body of his lovely face and the hands, and he adroitly joins them together. Such was the set of these incomprehensible and capricious inventions, which the lighter fancy and ingenuity of Du Clos converted into a fairy story, full of pleasantry and satire.[174]

Among the novelties of this small volume, not the least remarkable is the dedication of this fairy romance to the public, which excited great attention, and charmed and provoked our author's fickle patron. Du Clos here openly ridicules, and dares his protector and his judge. This hazardous attack was successful, and the author soon acquired the reputation which he afterwards maintained, of being a writer who little respected the common prejudices of the world. Freron replied by a long criticism, entitled "*Réponse du Public à l'Auteur d'Acajou*;" but its severity was not discovered in its length; so that the public, who had been so keenly ridiculed, and so hardily braved in the light and sparkling page of the haughty Du Clos, preferred the caustic truths and the pleasant insult.

In this "Epistle to the Public," the author informs us that, "excited by example, and encouraged by the success he had often witnessed, he designed to write a piece of nonsense. He was only embarrassed by the choice of subject. Politics, Morals, and Literature, were equally the same to me: but I found, strange to say, all these matters pre-occupied by persons who seem to have laboured with the same view. I found silly things in all kinds, and I saw myself under the necessity of adopting the reasonable ones to become singular; so that I do not yet despair that we may one day discover truth, when we shall have exhausted all our errors.

"I first proposed to write down all erudition, to show the freedom and independence of genius, whose fertility is such as not to require borrowing anything from foreign sources; but I observed that this had sunk into a mere commonplace, trite and trivial, invented by indolence, adopted by ignorance, and which adds nothing to genius,

"Mathematics, which has succeeded to erudition, begins to be unfashionable; we know at present indeed that one may be as great a

dizzard in resolving a problem as in restoring a reading. Everything is compatible with genius, but nothing can give it.

"For the *_bel esprit_*, so much envied, so much sought after, it is almost as ridiculous to pretend to it, as it is difficult to attain. Thus the scholar is contemned, the mathematician tires, the man of wit and genius is hissed. What is to be done?"

Having told the whimsical origin of this tale, Du Clos continues: "I do not know, my dear Public, if you will approve of my design; however, it appears to me ridiculous enough to deserve your favour; for, to speak to you like a friend, you appear to unite all the stages of human life, only to experience all their cross-accidents. You are a child to run after trifles; a youth when driven by your passions; and, in mature age, you conclude you are wise, because your follies are of a more solemn nature, for you grow old only to dote; to talk at random, to act without design, and to believe you judge, because you pronounce sentence.

"I respect you greatly; I esteem you but little; you are not worthy of being loved. These are my sentiments respecting you; if you insist on others from me, in that case,

"I am,
"Your most humble and obedient servant."

The caustic pleasantry of this "Epistle Dedicatory" was considered by some mawkish critics so offensive, that when the editor of the "Cabinet de Fées," a vast collection of fairy tales, republished this little playful satire and whimsical fancy-piece, he thought proper to cancel the "Epistle:" concluding that it was entirely wanting in that respect with which the public ought to be addressed! This editor, of course, was a Frenchman: we view him in the ridiculous attitude of making his profound bow, and expressing all this "high consideration" for this same "Public," while, with his opera-hat in his hand, he is sweeping away the most poignant and delectable page of Acajou and Zirphile.

ZOOS

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Damn!*, by Henry Louis Mencken

I often wonder how much sound and nourishing food is fed to the animals in the zoological gardens of America every week, and try to figure out what the public gets in return for the cost thereof. The annual bill must surely run into millions; one is constantly hearing how much beef a lion downs at a meal, and how many tons of hay an elephant dispatches in

a month. And to what end? To the end, principally, that a horde of superintendents and keepers may be kept in easy jobs. To the end, secondarily, that the least intelligent minority of the population may have an idiotic show to gape at on Sunday afternoons, and that the young of the species may be instructed in the methods of amour prevailing among chimpanzees and become privy to the technic employed by jaguars, hyenas and polar bears in ridding themselves of lice.

So far as I can make out, after laborious visits to all the chief zoos of the nation, no other imaginable purpose is served by their existence. One hears constantly, true enough (mainly from the gentlemen they support) that they are educational. But how? Just what sort of instruction do they radiate, and what is its value? I have never been able to find out. The sober truth is that they are no more educational than so many firemen's parades or displays of sky-rockets, and that all they actually offer to the public in return for the taxes wasted upon them is a form of idle and witless amusement, compared to which a visit to a penitentiary, or even to Congress or a state legislature in session, is informing, stimulating and ennobling.

Education your grandmother! Show me a schoolboy who has ever learned anything valuable or important by watching a mangy old lion snoring away in its cage or a family of monkeys fighting for peanuts. To get any useful instruction out of such a spectacle is palpably impossible; not even a college professor is improved by it. The most it can imaginably impart is that the stripes of a certain sort of tiger run one way and the stripes of another sort some other way, that hyenas and polecats smell worse than Greek 'bus boys, that the Latin name of the raccoon (who was unheard of by the Romans) is *_Procyon lotor_*. For the dissemination of such banal knowledge, absurdly emitted and defectively taken in, the taxpayers of the United States are mulcted in hundreds of thousands of dollars a year. As well make them pay for teaching policemen the theory of least squares, or for instructing roosters in the laying of eggs.

But zoos, it is argued, are of scientific value. They enable learned men to study this or that. Again the facts blast the theory. No scientific discovery of any value whatsoever, even to the animals themselves, has ever come out of a zoo. The zoo scientist is the old woman of zoology, and his alleged wisdom is usually exhibited, not in the groves of actual learning, but in the yellow journals. He is to biology what the late Camille Flammarion was to astronomy, which is to say, its court jester and *reductio ad absurdum*. When he leaps into public notice with some new pearl of knowledge, it commonly turns out to be no more than the news that Marie Bashkirtseff, the Russian lady walrus, has had her teeth plugged with zinc and is expecting twins. Or that Pishposh, the man-eating alligator, is down with locomotor ataxia. Or that Damon, the grizzly, has just finished his brother Pythias in the tenth round, chewing off his tail, nose and remaining ear.

Science, of course, has its uses for the lower animals. A diligent study of their livers and lights helps to an understanding of the anatomy and physiology, and particularly of the pathology, of man. They are necessary aids in devising and manufacturing many remedial agents, and in testing the virtues of those already devised; out of the mute agonies of a rabbit or a calf may come relief for a baby with diphtheria, or means for an archdeacon to escape the consequences of his youthful follies. Moreover, something valuable is to be got out of a mere study of their habits, instincts and ways of mind--knowledge that, by analogy, may illuminate the parallel doings of the _genus homo_, and so enable us to comprehend the primitive mental processes of Congressmen, morons and the rev. clergy.

But it must be obvious that none of these studies can be made in a zoo. The zoo animals, to begin with, provide no material for the biologist; he can find out no more about their insides than what he discerns from a safe distance and through the bars. He is not allowed to try his germs and specifics upon them; he is not allowed to vivisect them. If he would find out what goes on in the animal body under this condition or that, he must turn from the inhabitants of the zoo to the customary guinea pigs and street dogs, and buy or steal them for himself. Nor does he get any chance for profitable inquiry when zoo animals die (usually of lack of exercise or ignorant doctoring), for their carcasses are not handed to him for autopsy, but at once stuffed with gypsum and excelsior and placed in some museum.

Least of all do zoos produce any new knowledge about animal behavior. Such knowledge must be got, not from animals penned up and tortured, but from animals in a state of nature. A college professor studying the habits of the giraffe, for example, and confining his observations to specimens in zoos, would inevitably come to the conclusion that the giraffe is a sedentary and melancholy beast, standing immovable for hours at a time and employing an Italian to feed him hay and cabbages. As well proceed to a study of the psychology of a juris-consult by first immersing him in Sing Sing, or of a juggler by first cutting off his hands. Knowledge so gained is inaccurate and imbecile knowledge. Not even a college professor, if sober, would give it any faith and credit.

There remains, then, the only true utility of a zoo: it is a childish and pointless show for the unintelligent, in brief, for children, nursemaids, visiting yokels and the generality of the defective. Should the taxpayers be forced to sweat millions for such a purpose? I think not. The sort of man who likes to spend his time watching a cage of monkeys chase one another, or a lion gnaw its tail, or a lizard catch flies, is precisely the sort of man whose mental weakness should be combatted at the public expense, and not fostered. He is a public liability and a public menace, and society should seek to improve him. Instead of that, we spend a lot of money to feed his degrading appetite

and further paralyze his mind. It is precisely as if the community provided free champagne for dipsomaniacs, or hired lecturers to convert the army to the doctrines of the Bolsheviki.

Of the abominable cruelties practised in zoos it is unnecessary to make mention. Even assuming that all the keepers are men of delicate natures and ardent zoophiles (which is about as safe as assuming that the keepers of a prison are all sentimentalists, and weep for the sorrows of their charges), it must be plain that the work they do involves an endless war upon the native instincts of the animals, and that they must thus inflict the most abominable tortures every day. What could be a sadder sight than a tiger in a cage, save it be a forest monkey climbing despairingly up a barked stump, or an eagle chained to its roost? How can man be benefitted and made better by robbing the seal of its arctic ice, the hippopotamus of its soft wallow, the buffalo of its open range, the lion of its kingship, the birds of their air?

I am no sentimentalist, God knows. I am in favor of vivisection unrestrained, so long as the vivisectionist knows what he is about. I advocate clubbing a dog that barks unnecessarily, which all dogs do. I enjoy hangings, particularly of converts to the evangelical faiths. The crunch of a cockroach is music to my ears. But when the day comes to turn the prisoners of the zoo out of their cages, if it is only to lead them to the swifter, kinder knife of the _schochet_, I shall be present and rejoicing, and if any one present thinks to suggest that it would be a good plan to celebrate the day by shooting the whole zoo faculty, I shall have a revolver in my pocket and a sound eye in my head.

EMILE ZOLA.

from FRENCH LITERATURE section of Internet Archive's etext of
THE MASTERPIECES AND THE HISTORY OF LITERATURE
EDITED BY JULIAN HAWTHORNE JOHN RUSSELL YOUNG
JOHN PORTER LAMBERTON and OLIVER H. G. LEIGH

PROMINENT as Zola has been for years in contemporary French literature, it is not yet time for a proper estimate of his work to be formed. He was born in 1840, and is still at work. His origin was obscure ; his mother was French, his father Italian ; his youth was embarrassed by poverty, and it was not until after his thirtieth year that he conceived the plan of the Rougon-Macquart Series of novels, in which he attempts to apply the theory of heredity as a sufficient explanation of the events of human life. His ambition was to emulate, or supplement, Balzac's great " Human Comedy;" but his work is vitiated by the bigotry of its underlying

theory, and there results a monotony which is not relieved by the beauties and compensations of art. Zola's little code of dogmas fails adequately to measure the dimensions of mankind. Nevertheless, he is a writer of force and power ; he can draw character and weave an absorbing web of circumstances.

As Zola was the first writer of fiction deliberately to undertake the analysis of human nature on scientific principles, his books soon attracted attention, and presently won a fame, or a notoriety, which is altogether in excess of their true value* The foul indecency of many of them augmented their commercial worth, and as leader of a new Naturalistic School, Zola appeared as one of the foremost literary men of France, if not of his age. But sober criticism is compelled to see in him a mind deeply tainted with unwholesome predispositions ; he takes the gloomy and repulsive side even of his own dismal theory; and he fails, in the end, to convince us that he has discovered truth. There is in the contents of his series enough good writing and just observation to warrant a sound literary reputation ; and we may conjecture that, had he been endowed with a healthier temperament, or had he avoided the pitfalls of a shallow and inconclusive science, he might have been known as an honored member of the literary guild ; yet it should be borne in mind that his success, such as it is, may be due to that same mental perversity which renders that success transitory and unsound. The frequent and violent denunciations of Zola have not injured him ; but he has been made ridiculous, and his vogue shortened, by the many absurd eulogies and analyses of his productions, put forth by hysteric critics who hastened to accept him at his own solemn and extravagant valuation. It has been said that the value of each one of his novels is enhanced by the fact that it is one of the series a part of an organic whole. But the opposite of this is more probably the truth ; we could accept and perhaps admire many single productions of his genius, were we not compelled to regard each but as a facet of his entire achievement. We could forgive him for a dreary, morbid and repulsive book, but not for forcing us to regard it as a step in the development of a materialistic and unconfirmed hypothesis of mortal existence.

The underlying structural idea of the series is that of two branches of a family, one legitimate, one illegitimate, gradually ramifying throughout the various grades and phases of society, and exemplifying the characteristic types of modern life. There is insanity at the root of the genealogical tree of the race, and it flowers in all manner of sordid, vicious and monstrous ways. The author aims, in imitation of Flaubert,

to be coldly dispassionate in his treatment, and to concede nothing to sentiment and art ; he professes to seek the truth only, and to be sublimely indifferent to consequences. But this is a mere pose, which, if it deceives Zola himself, deceives no one else. It would be easy to point to inconsistencies in his execution, as well as to fallacies in his method ; his stories are not natural in the sense he pretends ; they bear the marks of the personal equation of their composer as plainly as do those of other writers. Indeed, one of the few things which his books go near to demonstrate is, that to reproduce nature in novels is impossible. We must select, emphasize and arrange ; we must begin, culminate and conclude. Zola, no more than another man, is of a stature to see the bend of the infinite arc of human destiny ; and the petty arcs he traces on his paper are ridiculous, not so much in themselves, as in their pretensions.

Zola's most widely-known books are "L'Assommoir," "Nana," "La Terre" and "Le Debacle." They are also in many respects his most revolting productions. In "Le Rêve" he attempts to show that he can write a pure story; but it is one of his most labored and least interesting efforts. It may be said, paradoxically, that Zola is at his best when at his worst. But he has been diligent, painstaking, and in his own way conscientious ; and the profession of literature may confess a debt to him. It will never again be possible for a successful writer to be a careless one, or to neglect the study of life, as a preliminary to depicting it. Zola overdid the note-book, or misused it; but he showed the value of strict observation ; and the literature of the future, if it remain true to art, may thank him for the hint that reality cannot safely be ignored.

It has been Zola's resolute ambition to be elected a member of the French Academy; but thus far he has been unsuccessful. No one would grudge him gratification in this respect on personal grounds ; but he desires the honor less for personal reasons, than as an endorsement of his literary philosophy; and it is doubtless on this very ground that it is withheld. Several of his books have been dramatized, and achieved popularity on the stage.

When his Rougon-Macquart Series was brought to a conclusion, Zola projected another literary scheme, to illustrate the religious movement of the age in three works : "Le Lourdes," "Rome" and "Paris," corresponding somewhat remotely to Faith, Hope and Charity. A priest who has become perplexed with doubts goes on a pilgrimage to Lourdes to restore his faith, but rather has his disbelief increased by what he

sees there ; he goes to Rome, but is disappointed ; he returns to Paris and there finds science and truth in closest conflict with ignorance and misery, and accepts beneficence to one's neighbors as the chief duty and proper aim of life.

Hardly had Zola finished these romances of religion when he startled the 1 world by interfering in political affairs, accusing the heads of the army of the grossest injustice in the condemnation of Captain Dreyfus and demanding a new trial for the victim. The result was his own trial, condemnation, appeal and withdrawal from France. Meantime unexpected revelations seem to prove that he was in the right, and French public opinion, which had been excited against him for attacking the army administration, turned in his favor.

A FIGHT WITH FLAILS.

(From "LaTerre.")

WHEN the relatives, invited to a baptism and supper, had gone to look over the farm, Buteau, dissatisfied at losing the afternoon, took off his jacket and began to thresh, in the paved corner of the court-yard ; for he needed a sack of wheat.

But he soon wearied of threshing alone, he wanted, to warm him up, the double cadence of the flails, tapping in measure ; and he called Frangoise, who often aided him in this work, her arms as hard as those of a lad : " Eh ! Fra^oise, will you come ? "

His wife, who was preparing a ragout of veal with carrots, and who had charged her sister to watch a roast of pork on the spit, wished to prevent the latter from obeying. But Buteau persisted, and Frangoise, who had already put on an old dress, was forced to follow him. She took a flail, her own. With both hands she made it whirl above her head > bringing it down upon the wheat, which it struck with a sharp blow. Buteau, opposite her, did the same, and soon nothing was seen but the bits of flying wood. The grain leaped, fell like hail, beneath the panting toc-toc of the two threshers.

At a quarter to seven o'clock, as the night was coming on, Fouan and the Delhommes presented themselves.

" We must finish," Buteau cried to them, without stopping. " Fire away, Franoise ! "

She did not pause, tapped harder, in the excitement of the

work and the noise. And it was thus that Jean, who arrived in his turn, with the permission to dine out, found them. Frangoise, on seeing him, stopped short, troubled. Buteau, having wheeled about, stood for an instant motionless with surprise and anger. " What are you doing here ? "

But L,ise cried out, with her gay air: " Eh ! true, I have not told you. I saw him this morning, and asked him to come."

The inflamed face of her husband became so terrible, that she added, wishing to excuse herself : " I have an idea, Pre Fouan, that he has a request to make of you. ' '

"What request? " said the old man.

Jean colored, and stammered, greatly vexed that the matter should be broached in this way, so quickly, before everybody. But Buteau interrupted him violently, the smiling glance that his wife had cast upon Frangoise had sufficed to enlighten him : " Are you making game of us ? She is not for you, you scoundrel! "

This brutal reception restored Jean his courage. He turned his back, and addressed the old man: " This is the story, Pre Fouan, it's very simple. As you are Frangoise's guardian, it is necessary for me to address myself to you to get her, is it not ? If she will take me, I will take her. It is marriage that I ask."

Frangoise, who was still holding her flail, dropped it, trembling with fright. She ought, however, to have expected this ; but never could she have thought that Jean would dare to demand her thus, immediately. Why had he not talked with her about it first ? She was overwhelmed, she could not have said if she trembled with hope or with fear. And, all of a quiver, she stood between the two men.

Buteau did not give Fouan time to answer. He resumed, with a growing fury : " Eh ? you have gall ! An old fellow of thirty-three marry a girl of eighteen ! Only fifteen years difference ! Is it not laughable ? "

Jean commenced to get angry. " What difference does it make to you, if I want her and she wants me ? " And he turned towards Franchise, that she might give her decision. But she remained frightened, stiffened, and seeming not to understand the case. She could not say No; she did not say Yes, however. Buteau, besides, was looking at her as if

he would kill her, to force back the Yes in her throat. If she married, he would lose her land. The sudden thought of this result put the climax to his rage.

"See here, father, see here, Delhomme, it's not right to give this girl to that old villain, who is not even of the district, who comes from nobody knows where, after having dragged his ugly mug in all directions ! A failure of a joiner who has turned farmer, because, very sure, he has some dirty business to hide ! "

"And afterwards? If I want her and she wants me!" repeated Jean, who had controlled himself. "Come, Françoise, speak."

"But it's true ! " cried Lise, carried away by the desire of marrying off her sister, in order to disembarass herself of her, "what have you to say, if they come to an understanding ? She has no need of your consent ; it's very considerate in her not to send you about your business with a flea in your ear. You exhaust our patience ! ' ' "

Then Buteau saw that the marriage would be decided upon, if the young girl spoke. At that instant I^a Grande (the old aunt) entered the court-yard, followed by the Charleses, who had returned with fcoide. And he summoned them with a gesture, without knowing yet what he would say. Then his face puffed out, he bawled, shaking his fist at his wife and sister-in-law :

11 Name of God ! I'll break the heads of both of them, the jades!"

The Charleses caught his words, open-mouthed, with consternation. Madam Charles threw herself forward, as if to cover with her body filoide, who was listening; then, pushing her towards the kitchen garden, she herself cried out, very loudly : ' ' Go look at the salads ; go look at the cabbages ! Oh ! the fine cabbages ! "

Buteau continued, violently abusing the two women, upon whom he heaped all sorts of epithets. Lise, astonished at this sudden fit, contented herself with shrugging her shoulders, repeating : ' ' He is crazy ! he is crazy ! ' ' "

"Tell him it's none of his business!" cried Jean to Françoise.

"Very sure it's none of his business!" said the young

girl, with a tranquil air.

"Ah! it's none of my business, eh?" resumed Buteau.

"Well, I'm going to make you both march, jades that you are!"

This mad audacity paralyzed, bewildered Jean. The others, the Delhommes, Fouan, I^a Grande, held aloof. They did not seem surprised ; they thought, evidently, that Buteau had a right to do as he pleased in his own house. Then Buteau felt himself victorious in his Undisputed strength of possession. He turned towards Jean. "And now for you, scoundrel, who came here to turn my house upside down ! Get out of here on the instant! Eh! you refuse. Wait, wait!"

He picked up his flail, he whirled it about his head, and Jean had only the time to seize the other flail, Franchise's, to defend himself. Cries burst forth, they strove to throw themselves between them ; but the two men were so terrible that they drew back. The long handles of the flails carried the blows for several yards; they swept the court-yard. The ;two adversaries stood alone, in the centre, at a distance from each other, enlarging the circle of their flails. They uttered not a word, their teeth set. Only the sharp blows of the pieces of wood were heard at each stroke.

Buteau had launched forth the first blow, and Jean, yet stooping, would have had his head broken, if he had not leaped backwards. Instantly, with a sudden stiffening of the muscles, he arose, he raised, he brought down the flail, like a thresher beating the grain. But already the other was striking also, the two flail ends met, bent back upon their leather straps, in ^he mad flight of wounded birds. Three times the same clash was reproduced. They saw only those bits of wood whirl and hiss in the air at the extremity of the handles, always ready to fall and split the skulls which they menaced.

Delhomme and Fouan, however, had rushed forward, when the women cried out. Jean had just rolled in the straw ? treacherously stricken by Buteau, who, with a blow like a whip stroke, along the ground, fortunately deadened, had hit him on the legs. He sprang to his feet, he brandished his flail in a rage that the pain increased. The end described a large circle, fell to the right, when the other expected it to the left. A few lines nearer, and the brains would have been beaten out. Only the ear was grazed. The blow, passing obliquely, fell with all its force upon the arm, which was broken clean. The bone cracked with the sound of breaking glass.

"Ah! the murderer!" howled Buteau, "he has killed me!"

Jean, haggard, his eyes red with blood, dropped his weapon. Then, for a moment, he stared at them all, as if stupefied by what had happened there, so rapidly ; and he went away, limping, with a gesture of furious despair.

When he had turned the corner of the house, towards the plain, he saw La Trouille, who had witnessed the fight, over the garden hedge. She was still laughing at it, having come there to skulk around the baptismal repast, to which neither her father nor herself had been invited. Mahomet would split his sides with merriment over the little family fete, over his brother's broken arm ! She squirmed as if she had been tickled, almost ready to fall over, so much was she amused at it all.

c * Ah ! Caporal, what a hit ! " cried she. " The bone went crack ! It wasn't the least bit funny ! "

He did not answer, slackening his step with an overwhelmed air. And she followed him, whistling to her geese, which she had brought to have a pretext for stationing herself and listening behind the walls. Jean, mechanically, returned towards the threshing machine, which was yet at work amid the fading light. He thought that it was all over, that he could never see the Buteaus again, that they would never give him Françoise. How stupid it was ! Ten minutes had sufficed ; a quarrel which he had not sought, a blow so unfortunate, just at the moment when matters were progressing favorably ! And now there was an end to it all ! The roaring of the machine, in the depths of the twilight, prolonged itself like a great cry of distress.

JAZZ BAND IMPRESSIONS

from the Project Gutenberg etext of *A Thousand and One Afternoons in Chicago*,
by Ben Hecht

The trombone player has a straight part. He umpah umps with the conventional trombone fatalism. Whatever the tune, whatever the harmonies, trombone umpah umps regardless. Umpah ump is the soul of all things. Cadenzas, glissandos, arpeggios, chromatics, syncopations, blue melodies--these are the embroidery of sound. From year to year these

change, these pass. Only the umpah ump remains. And tonight the trombone player plays what he will play a thousand nights from tonight--umpah ump.

The bassoon and the bull fiddle--they umpah ump along. Underneath the quaver and whine of the jazz they beat the time, they make the tuneless rhythm. The feet dancing on the crowded cabaret floor listen cautiously for the trombone, the bassoon and the bull fiddle. They have a liaison with the umpah umps--the feet. Long ago they danced only to the umpah umps. There were no cadenzas, glissandos, arpeggios then. There was only the thumping of cedar wood on cedar wood, on ebony or taut deerskin.

Civilizations have risen, fallen and risen again. Armies, gods, races have been chewed into mist by the years. But the thumping remains. The feet of the dancers on the cabaret floor keep a rendezvous with the ebony on the taut deerskin, with the cedar wood beating on cedar wood.

* * * * *

The clarinet screeches, wails, moans and whistles. The clarinet flings an obbligato high over the heads of the dancers on the cabaret floor. It makes shrill sounds. It raves like a fireless Ophelia. It plays the clown, the tragedian, the acrobat.

A whimsical insanity lurks in the music of the clarinet. It stutters ecstasies. It postures like Tristan and whimpers like a livery-stable nag. It grimaces like Peer Gynt and winks like a lounge lizard, a cake eater.

It is not for the feet of the dancers on the crowded cabaret floor. The feet follow the umpah umps. The thoughts of the dancers follow the clarinet. The thoughts of the boobilariat dance easily to the tangled lyric of the clarinet. The thoughts tie themselves into crazy knots. The music of the clarinet becomes like crazily uncoiling whips. The thoughts of the dancers shake themselves loose from words under the spur of the whips. They begin to dance, not as the feet dance. There is another rhythm here. The rhythm of little ecstasies whimpering. Thus the thoughts of the dancers dance--dead hopes, wearied ambitions, vanishing youth do an inarticulate can-can in the heads of the dancers on the cabaret floor.

* * * * *

The cornet wears a wooden gag in its mouth and a battered black derby hangs over its end. Umpah ump from the trombone, the bull fiddle and the bassoon. Tangled lyrics from the clarinet. And the cornet cakewalks like a hoyden vampire, the cornet whinnies like an odalisque expiring in the arms of the Wizard of Oz.

Lust giggles at a sly jest out of the cornet. Passion thumbs its nose at the stars out of the cornet. The melody of jazz, the tin pan ghosts of Chopin, Tchaikowsky, Old Black Joe, Liszt and Mumbo Magumbo, jungle

troubadour of the Congo, come whinnying out from under the pendant derby.

The dancers on the cabaret floor close their eyes and grin to themselves.
The cornet kids them along. When they grow sad it burlesques their sorrow.
The cornet laughs at them. It leers like a satyr master of ceremonies at them. It is Pan in a clown suit, Silenus on a trick mule, Eros in a Pullman smoker.

* * * * *

Laugh, dance, jerk, wiggle and kid all you want--but the Lady of the Sea Foam whispers a secret. Aphrodite, become a female barytone, still takes herself very seriously. Aphrodite, alas, is always serious. She gurgles a sonorous plaint out of the saxophone. The cornet sneers at her. The clarinet sneaks up on her and tweaks her nose. The trombone, the bull fiddle and the bassoon ignore her altogether. And the dancers on the cabaret floor are too busy to dance to her simple wails.

Yet there is no mistake. Aphrodite, the queen, abandoned by her courtiers and surrounded by this galaxy of mountebanks, is still Aphrodite. Big-bosomed, sleepy-eyed and sad lipped she walks invisible among the dancers on the cabaret floor and they listen to her voice out of the saxophone.

The drums, the piano and the violin give her a fluttering drape. But there are things to be seen. This is not the Aphrodite of the Blue Danube waltz--but a duskier, more mystical lady. There are no roses on her cheeks, no lilies in her skin. She is colored like a panther flower and her limbs are heavy with taboo magic. But she is still imperial. In vain the mountebanks and burlesqueries of her court. Her lips place themselves against the hearts of the dancers on the cabaret floor. And she croons her ancient hymns.

The hearts of the dancers give themselves to the saxophone. Their feet keep a rendezvous with the umpah umps. Their thoughts dance on the slack wire of the clarinet. Their veins beat time to the whinny of the derby wreathed cornet. The fiddles and the drums are partners for their arms and their muscles. But their hearts embrace shyly the Mother Aphrodite. Their hearts listen sadly and proudly and they almost forget to dance.

* * * * *

Midnight approaches. Enameled faces, stenciled smiles, painted eyes and slants of colored hats--these are the women. Careless, polite, suave, grinning--these are the men. The jazz band plays. The cabaret floor, jammed, seems to be moving around like a groaning turnstile.

Bodies are hidden. The spotlight from the balcony begins to throw a series of colors. Melody is lost. The jazz band is hammering like a mad

blacksmith. Whang! Bam! Whang! Bam! Nobody hears the music of the band. Bodies together move on the turnstile floor. This is the part of the feast of Belshazzar that the authorities censored in a Griffith movie. This is the description of Tiberius's court that the authorities suppressed. Here are the poems that hide on the forbidden shelves of the public library.

The pulp of figures dissolves. The hammering band has finished. Men and women, grown suddenly polite and social, return to their tables. Citizens of a neighborhood, toilers, clerks, fourflushers, wives, husbands, groppers, nobodies, less-than-nobodies--watch and see where they go. Into the brick holes, into the apartment buildings. They pack themselves away like ants in an anthill.

The nobodies--the groppers, husbands, wage-earners, fourflushers--but they made a violent picture a moment ago. Under the revolving colors of the floodlight and the hammering, whinnying music of the jazz band they became again the mask of Dionysus--the ancient satanical mask which nature slips over her head when in quest of diversion.

Z Project Gutenberg's *The Roycroft Dictionary*, by Elbert Hubbard

ZODIAC: 1. The wallpaper of the heavens. 2. The mirrors of the nothingness of Man and the sublimity of the nothingness of Space.

ZEAL: The feeling you have before you secure the thing, as compared with "Stung," which is your condition after you have captured it.

ZONE: The region immediately surrounding a Limburger Cheese.

ZERO: A round figure often referred to by Doctor Cook in his diary, and which his enemies tried to make symbolic of himself.

ZIGZAG: The route followed by poets in arriving at truth, as opposed to the direct course which they take for the buffet.

ZEUS: A grouchy old god who was so reduced in estate that he posed as a model for Greek artists.

ZEPHYR: A ladylike blizzard.

ZEITGEIST: The things that everybody believes, but that nobody understands.

LATER DEVELOPMENT OF ZEN.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Zen Buddhism*, by Arthur Waley

Zen was at first a purely personal discipline, non-monastic, non-ethical, not demanding the acceptance of any Scripture or any tradition. In modern Japan it has to some extent regained this character. In China the habit of quoting written authority was too strong to be easily discarded. The Zen masters soon began to answer difficult questions by quoting from the Buddhist Scriptures. Convenience dictated that practicers of Zen should live in communities and monasticism was soon established in their sect, as in every other sect of Buddhism. Questions of conduct arose, and Zen was squared with the contemporary ethical outlook; though in medieval Japanese literature wicked and cynical persons are generally depicted as adepts of Zen.

Bodhidharma denied the existence of Good and Evil; but it was pointed out by later apologists that the Zen adept, having viewed the Absolute, is convinced of the unreality and futility of those pleasures and possessions which are the incentive to sin. The Zen practitioner, though he makes no moral effort, nevertheless is certain not to sin, because he is certain not to be tempted.

Finally, Zen forged itself a tradition. Probably during the eleventh century a Scripture^[5] was fabricated which recounts how once when Buddha was preaching, he plucked a flower and smiled. Only the disciple Kāshyapa understood the significance of this act. Between him and the Buddha there passed a wordless communication of Absolute Truths. This communication was silently passed on by Kāshyapa to his disciple, and so ultimately to Bodhidharma, who brought it to China.

[5] _Dai Bonten Monbutsu Ketsugi Kyō._

The method of teaching by symbolic acts (such as the plucking of a flower) was extensively used by the Zen masters. For example, when a disciple asked Enkwan a question about the nature of Buddha, he answered, "Bring me a clean bowl." When the priest brought the bowl, the master said, "Now put it back where you found it." He signified that the priest's questionings must return to their proper place, the questioner's heart, from which alone spiritual knowledge can be obtained.

The object of the Zen teachers, as of some eccentric schoolmasters whom I have known, seems at first sight to have been merely to puzzle and surprise their pupils to the highest possible degree. A peculiar "brusquerie" was developed in Zen monasteries. The literature of the sect consists chiefly in an endless series of anecdotes recording

the minutest happenings in the lives of famous Zen monks and their (apparently) most trivial sayings. But behind these trifling acts and sayings a deep meaning lay hid. The interpretation of such teaching depends on a complete knowledge of the symbolism used. I am not inclined to agree with those students of Zen who assert that its written teaching are wholly devoid of intellectual content or so completely esoteric as not to admit of explanation in words. Like other Buddhist philosophers the Zen masters were chiefly concerned with the attempt to define the relation between the One and the Many, between the subjective and objective aspects of life.

The idealism of Zen does not mean that the phenomenal world has no importance. To those who have not reached complete self-realisation the urgencies of that world remain paramount and are the only stepping-stones upon which he can climb higher.

On the day of his arrival at the monastery a novice presented himself before the abbot, begging to be allowed to begin his spiritual exercises without further delay. "Have you had supper?" asked the abbot. "Yes." "Then go and wash your plate."

THE ZEN MASTERS.

Let us begin with Enō, a master of the seventh century. He lost his parents when he was young and earned his living by gathering firewood. One day when he was in the market-place he heard some one reading the Diamond Sūtra.[6] He asked where such books were to be had and was told "From Master Kōnin on the Yellow Plum-blossom Hill." Accordingly he went to Kōnin's Monastery in Anhui and presented himself before the Master. "Where do you come from?" "From the South." "Bah! In the South they have not Buddha in their souls." "North and South," replied Enō, "are human distinctions that Buddha knows nothing of."

[6] Translated by W. Gemmell, 1912. Its use by Kōnin shows that Zen did not long avoid the use of scriptures.

Kōnin accepted him as a lay-brother and put him to pound rice in the bakery.

Kōnin was growing old and wished to choose his successor. He therefore instituted a poetical competition in which each monk was to epitomise in a quatrain the essence of Zen. The favourite candidate was the warden Shinshū, who sent in the following verses:

_The body is the trunk of the Bodhi-tree;
The mind is the bright mirror's stand;
Scrub your mirror continually,
Lest the dust eclipse its brightness._

Enō, as a lay-brother, was not qualified to compete. Some one told him of Shinshū's quatrain. "Mine would be very different," he exclaimed, and persuaded one of the boys employed in the bakery to go stealthily by night and inscribe the following poem on the monastery-wall:

_Knowledge is not a tree;
The Mirror has no stand;
Since nothing exists,
How could dust rise and cover it?_

The authorship of the poem was discovered and the abbot Kōnin visited Enō in the bakery. "Is your rice white or no?" he asked. "White?" answered Enō; "it has not yet been sifted." Thereupon the abbot struck three times on the rice-mortar with his staff and departed. Enō understood his meaning. That night at the third watch he came to Kōnin's cell and was invested with the abbot's mantle, thereby becoming the Sixth Patriarch of the Zen Church. He died in 712 A.D., without having learned how to read or write.

FASHIONABLE ZEN.

The warden Shinshū had lost the Patriarchate and with it the spiritual headship of Zen. But as a compensation Fate had in store for him worldly triumphs of the most dazzling kind. Leaving the rural monastery of Kōnin, he entered the Temple of the Jade fountain in the great city of Kingchau. His fame soon spread over central China. He was a man of "huge stature, bushy eyebrows and shapely ears." The Empress Wu Hou, who had usurped the throne of China, notoriously cultivated the society of handsome priests. About 684 A.D. she summoned him to the Capital. Instead of commanding his presence at Court she came in a litter to his lodgings and actually knelt down before him. The friendship of this murderous and fiendishly cruel woman procured for him temporal dignities which in the eyes of the world completely outshone the rustic piety of the Sixth Patriarch. Shinshū at the Capital became as it were the Temporal Father of Zen, while Enō at his country monastery remained its spiritual pope. The successors of Enō became known as the Fathers of the Southern School; while the courtly and social Zen of Shinshū is called Zen of the North.

Was it in sincere goodwill or with the desire to discredit his rival that Shinshū invited Enō to join him at the Capital? In any case Enō had the good sense to refuse. "I am a man of low stature and humble appearance," he replied; "I fear that the men of the North would despise me and my doctrines"--thus hinting (with just that touch of malice which so often spices the unworldly) that Shinshū's pre-eminence in the North was due to outward rather than to spiritual graces.

Shinshū died in 706, outliving his august patroness by a year. To perpetuate his name a palace was turned into a memorial monastery; the Emperor's brother wrote his epitaph; his obsequies were celebrated with stupendous pomp.

His successor, Fujaku, at first remained at the Kingchau monastery where he had been Shinshū's pupil. But in 724 the irresolute Emperor Ming-huang, who had proscribed Buddhism ten years before, summoned Fujaku to the Imperial City. Here princes and grandees vied with one another in doing him honour. "The secret of his success," says the historian,[7] "was that he seldom spoke and generally looked cross. Hence his rare words and occasional smiles acquired in the eyes of his admirers an unmerited value." He died at the age of 89. On the day of his interment the great streets of Ch'ang-an were empty. The whole city had joined in the funeral procession. The Governor of Honan (one of the greatest functionaries in the State), together with his wife and children, all of them clad in monastic vestments, followed the bier, mingling with the promiscuous crowd of his admirers and disciples.

[7] _Old T'ang History_, 191.

Religion was at that time fashionable in the high society of Ch'ang-an, as it is to-day in the great Catholic capitals of Munich, Vienna or Seville. When I read of Fujaku's burial another scene at once sprang into my mind, the funeral of a great Bavarian dignitary, where I saw the noblemen of Munich walk hooded and barefoot through the streets.

I shall not refer again to the Northern School of Zen. One wonders whether the founders of religions are forced by fate to watch the posthumous development of their creeds. If so, theirs must be the very blackest pit of Hell.

Let us return to the Southern School, always regarded as the true repository of Zen tradition.

THE WIND TOWER.

Project Gutenberg's 'Round the Year in Myth and Song, by Florence Holbrook

In Athens is a temple called the Tower of the Winds. There the people came to offer sacrifices to the winds, and to hold games in their honor. The Athenians felt that the winds had great power, and therefore they built this beautiful tower. The tower has eight sides, and on each side is sculptured a representation of one of the winds.

All of the winds are shown with wings, and in a flying posture. Boreas, Aquilo, and Corus are the destructive winds, and are terrible

in appearance. Boreas, the north wind, is the father of storms at sea, and carries a triton's horn. Aquilo, the northeast wind, is showering hailstones, and Corus, the dry and parching northwest wind, has in his hand a vessel of charcoal.

The east wind, which in Greece is a pleasant wind, is carrying fruit and flowers. The rainy southeast wind, Eurus, is forming rain clouds; while Notus, the south wind, who brings the sudden storms of rain, is pouring rain from a jar. The southwest wind carries an ornament which was always placed at the stern of every ancient ship, for it was an important wind to the sailors of Greece. Zephyrus, the welcome west wind, has a lap filled with spring flowers.

The gentle Zephyrus married Flora, goddess of the springtime. Together they wander joyously over all lands, bringing happiness to the people. The south wind wakes the flowers, and as Zephyrus and Flora pass, violets, pansies, daffodils, and roses lift their pretty heads, and fill the land with beauty and fragrance.

[Illustration: **Zephyrus** and Flora.
Saintpierre (_modern_).
Carbon by Braun, Clement & Co.]

IN LOVE WITH THE CZARINA

Project Gutenberg's *In Love With the Czarina and Other Stories*, by Mór Jókai

In the time of the Czar Peter III. a secret society existed at St. Petersburg which bore the title of "The Nameless." Its members used to assemble in the house of a Russian nobleman, Jelagin by name, who alone knew the personality of each visitor, they being, for the most part, unknown to one another. Distinguished men, princes, ladies of the Court, officers of the Guard, Cossack soldiers, young commercial men, musicians, street-singers, actors and actresses, scientific men, clergymen and statesmen, used to meet here. Beauty and talent were alone qualifications for entry into the Society, the members of which were selected by Jelagin. Everyone addressed the other as "thee" and "thou," and they only made use of Christian names such as Anne, Alexandra, Katharine, Olga, Peter, Alexis, and Ivan. And for what purpose did they assemble here? To amuse themselves at their ease. Those who, by the prejudices of caste and rank, were utterly severed, and who occupied the mutual position of master and slave, tore the chains of their barriers asunder, and all met here. It is quite possible that he with whom the grenadier-private is now playing chess is the very same General who

might order him a hundred lashes to-morrow, should he take a step on parade without his command! And now he contends with him to make a queen out of a pawn!

It is also probable that the pretty woman who is singing sportive French songs to the accompaniment of the instrument she strikes with her left hand, is one of the Court ladies of the Czarina, who, as a rule, throws half-roubles out of her carriage to the street-musicians! Perhaps she is a Princess? possibly the wife of the Lord Chamberlain? or even higher in grade than this? Russian society, both high and low, flower and root, met in Jelagin's castle, and while there enjoyed equality in the widest sense of the word. Strange phenomenon! That this should take place in Russia, where so much is thought of aristocratic rank, official garb, and exterior pomp; where an inferior is bound to dismount from his horse upon meeting a superior, where sub-officers take off their coats in token of salute when they meet those of higher rank, and where generals kiss the priests' hands and the highest aristocrats fall on their faces before the Czar! Here they sing and dance and joke together, make fun of the Government, and tell anecdotes of the High Priests, utterly fearless, and dispensing with salutations!

Can this be done for love of novelty? The existence of this secret society was repeatedly divulged to the police, and these cannot be reproached for not having taken the necessary steps to denounce it; but proceedings, once begun, usually evaporated into thin air, and led to no results. The investigating officer either never discovered suspicious facts, or, if he did, matters were adjourned. Those who were arrested in connection with the affair were in some way set at liberty in peace and quietness; every document relating to the matter was either burnt or vanished, and whole sealed cases of writings were turned into plain white paper. When an influential officer took energetically in hand the prosecution of "The Nameless," he was generally sent to a foreign country on an important mission, from which he did not return for a considerable period. "The Nameless Society" must have had very powerful protectors. At the conclusion of one of these free and easy entertainments, a young Cossack hetman remained behind the crowd of departing guests, and when quite alone with the host he said to him:

"Jelagin, did you see the pretty woman with whom I danced the mazurka to-night?"

"Yes, I saw her. Are you smitten with her, as others have been?"

"That woman I must make my wife."

Jelagin gave the Cossack a blow on the shoulder and looked into his eyes.

"That you will not do! You will not take her as your wife, friend

Jemeljan."

"I shall marry her--I have resolved to do so."

"You will not marry her, for she will not go to you."

"If she does not come I will carry her off against her will."

"You can't marry her, because she has a husband."

"If she has a husband I will carry her off in company with him!"

"You can't carry her off, for she lives in a palace--she is guarded by many soldiers, and accompanied in her carriage by many outriders."

"I will take her away with her palace, her soldiers, and her carriage. I swear it by St. Gregory!"

Jelagin laughed mockingly.

"Good Jemeljan, go home and sleep out your love--that pretty woman is the Czarina!"

The hetman became pale for a moment, his breath stopped; but the next instant, with sparkling eyes, he said to Jelagin:

"In spite of this, what I have said I have said."

Jelagin showed the door to his guest. But, improbable as it may seem, Jemeljan was really not intoxicated, unless it were with the eyes of the pretty woman.

A few years elapsed. The Society of "The Nameless" was dissolved, or changed into one of another form. Katharine had her husband, the Czar, killed, and wore the crown herself. Many people said she had him killed, others took her part. It was urged that she knew what was going to happen, but could not prevent it--that she was compelled to act as she did, and to affect, after a great struggle with her generous heart, complete ignorance of poison being administered to her husband. It was said that she had acted rightly, and that the Czar's fate was a just one, for he was a wicked man; and finally, it was asserted that the whole statement was untrue, and that no one had killed Czar Peter, who died from intense inflammation of the stomach. He drank too much brandy. The immortal Voltaire is responsible for this last assertion. Whatever may have happened, Czar Peter was buried, and the Czarina Katharine now saw that her late husband belonged to those dead who do not sleep quietly. They rise--rise from their graves--stretch out their hands from their shrouds, and touch with them those who have forgotten them. They turn over in their last resting-place, and the whole earth seems to

tremble under the feet of those who walk above them!

Amongst the numerous contradictory stories told, one, difficult to believe, but which the people gladly credited, and which caused much bloodshed before it was wiped out of their memory, was this--that Czar Peter died neither by his own hand, nor by the hands of others, but that he still lived. It was said that a common soldier, with pock-marked face resembling the Czar, was shown in his stead to the public on the death-couch at St. Petersburg, and that the Czar himself had escaped from prison in soldier's clothes, and would return to retake his throne, to vanquish his wife, and behead his enemies! Five Czar pretenders rose one after the other in the wastes of the Russian domains. One followed the other with the motto, "Revenge on the faithless!" The usurpers conquered sometimes a northern, sometimes a southern province, collected forces, captured towns, drove out all officials, and put new ones in their places, so that it was necessary to send forces against them. If one was subjugated and driven away into the ice deserts, or captured and hung on the next tree, another Czar Peter would rise up in his place and cause rebellion, alarming the Court circle whilst they were enjoying themselves; and so things went on continually and continually. The murdered husband remained unburied, for to-day he might be put in the earth and to-morrow he would rise again one hundred miles off, and exclaim, "I still live!" He might be killed there, but would pop out his head again from the earth, saying, "Still I live." He had a hundred lives! When five of these Peter pretenders went the way of the real Czar a sixth rose, and this one was the most dreaded and most daring of all, whose name will perpetually be inscribed in the chronicles of the Russian people as a dreadful example to all who will not be taught wisdom, and his name is Jemeljan Pugasceff! He was born as an ordinary Cossack in the Don province, and took part in the Prussian campaign, at first as a paid soldier of Prussia, later as an adherent of the Czar. At the bombardment of Bender he had become a Cossack hetman. His extraordinary physical strength, his natural common sense and inventive power, had distinguished him even at this time, but the peace which was concluded barred before him the gate of progress. He was sent with many discharged officers back to the Don. Let them go again and look after their field labours! Pugasceff's head, however, was full of other ideas than that of again commencing cheese-making, from which occupation he had been called ten years before. He hated the Czarina, and adored her! He hated the proud woman who had no right to tread upon the neck of the Russians, and he adored the beautiful woman who possessed the right to tread upon every Russian's heart! He became possessed with the mad idea that he would tear down that woman from her throne, and take her afterwards into his arms. He had his plans prepared for this. He went along the Volga, where the Roskolniks live--they who oppose the Russian religion, and who were the adherents of the persecuted fanatics whose fathers and grandfathers had been continually extirpated by means of hanging, either on trees or scaffolds, and this only for the sole reason that they crossed themselves downwards, and not

upwards, as they do in Moscow!

The Roskolniks were always ready to plot if they had any pretence and could get a leader. Pugasceff wanted to commence his scheme with these, but he was soon betrayed, and fell into the hands of the police and was carried into a Kasan prison and put into chains. He might thus go on dreaming! Pugasceff dreamt one night that he burst the iron chains from his legs, cut through the wall of the prison, jumped down from the enclosure, swam through the surrounding trench whose depth was filled with sharp spikes, and that he made his way towards the uninhabited plains of the Ural Sorodok, without a crust of bread or a decent stitch of clothing! The Jakics Cossacks are the only inhabitants of the plains of Uralszk--the most dreaded tribe in Russia--living in one of those border countries only painted in outline on the map, and a people with whom no other on the plains form acquaintanceship. They change locality from year to year. One winter a Cossack band will pay a visit to the land of the Kirghese, and burn down their wooden huts; next year a Kirgizian band will render the same service to the Cossacks! Fighting is pleasanter work in the winter. In the summer everyone lives under the sky, and there are no houses to be destroyed! This people belong to the Roskolnik sect. Just a little while previously they had amused themselves by slaughtering the Russian Commissioner-General Traubenberg, with his suite, who came there to regulate how far they might be allowed to fish in the river Jaik, and with this act they thought they had clearly proved that the Government had nothing to do with their pike! Pugasceff had just taken refuge amongst them at the time when they were dividing the arms of the Russian soldiers, and were scheming as to what they should further do. One lovely autumn night the escaped convict, after a great deal of wandering in the miserable valley of Jeremina Kuriza, situated in the wildest part of the Ural Mountains, and in its yet more miserable town, Jaiczkoï, knocked at the door of the first Cossack habitation he saw and said that he was a refugee. He was received with an open heart, and got plenty of kind words and a little bread. The house-owner was himself poor; the Kirgizians had driven away his sheep. One of his sons, a priest of the Roskolnik persuasion, had been carried away from him into a lead-mine; the second had been taken to serve as a soldier, and had died; the third was hung because he had been involved in a revolt. Old Kocsenikoff remained at home without sons or family. Pugasceff listened to the grievances of his host, and said:

"These can be remedied."

"Who can raise for me my dead sons?" said the old man bitterly.

"The one who rose himself in order to kill."

"Who can that be?"

"The Czar."

"The murdered Czar?" asked the old soldier, with astonishment.

"He has been killed six times, and yet he lives. On my way here, whenever I met with people, they all asked me, 'Is it true that the Czar is not dead yet, and that he has escaped from prison?' I replied to them, 'It is true. He has found his way here, and ere long he will make his appearance before you.'"

"You say this, but how can the Czar get here?"

"He is already here."

"Where is he?"

"I am he!"

"Very well--very well," replied the old Roskolnik. "I understand what you want with me. I shall be on the spot if you wish it. All is the same to me as long as I have anyone to lead me. But who will believe that you are the Czar? Hundreds and hundreds have seen him face to face. Everybody knows that the visage of the Czar was dreadfully pockmarked, whilst yours is smooth."

"We can remedy that. Has not someone lately died of black-pox in this district?"

"Every day this happens. Two days ago my last labourer died."

"Well, I shall lay in his bed, and I shall rise from it like Czar Peter."

He did what he said. He lay in the infected bed. Two days later he got the black-pox, and six weeks afterwards he rose with the same wan face as one had seen on the unfortunate Czar.

Kocsenikoff saw that a man who could play so recklessly with his life did not come here to idle away his time. This is a country where out of ten men nine have stored away some revenge of their own for a future time. Amongst the first ten people to whom Kocsenikoff communicated his scheme, he found nine who were ready to assist in the daring undertaking, even at the cost of their lives; but the tenth was a traitor. He disclosed the desperate plot to Colonel Simonoff, the commander of Jaiczkoï, and the commander immediately arrested Kocsenikoff; but Pugasceff escaped on the horse which had been sent out with the Cossack who came to arrest him, and he even carried off the Cossack himself! He jumped into the saddle, patted and spurred the horse, and made his way into the forest.

History records for the benefit of future generations the name of the Cossack whom Pugasceff carried away with his horse: Csika was the name of this timid individual! This happened on September 15. Two days afterwards Pugasceff came back from the forest to the outskirts of the town Jaiczkoï. Then he had his horse, a scarlet fur-trimmed jacket, and three hundred brave horsemen. As he approached the town he had trumpets blown, and demanded that Colonel Simonoff should surrender and should come and kiss the hand of his rightful master, Czar Peter III.! Simonoff came with 5000 horsemen and 800 Russian regular troops against the rebels, and Pugasceff was in one moment surrounded. At this instant he took a loosely sealed letter from his breast and read out his proclamation in a ringing voice to the opposing troops, in which he appealed to the faithful Cossacks of Peter III. to help him to regain his throne and to aid him to drive away usurpers, threatening with death those traitors who should oppose his command. On hearing this the Cossack troops appeared startled, and the exclamation went from mouth to mouth, "The Czar lives! This is the Czar!" The officers tried to quiet the soldiers, but in vain. They commenced to fight amongst themselves, and the uproar lasted till late at night, with the result that it was not Simonoff who captured Pugasceff, but the latter who captured eleven of his officers; and when he retreated from the field his three hundred men had increased to eight hundred. It was a matter of great difficulty to the Colonel to lead back the rest into the town. Pugasceff set up his camp outside in the garden of a Russian nobleman, and on his trees he hung up the eleven officers. His opponent was so much alarmed that he did not dare to attack him, but lay wait for him in the trenches, at the mouth of the cannon. Our daring friend was not quite such a lunatic as to go and meet him. He required greater success, more decisive battles, and more guns. He started against the small towns which the Government had built along the Jaik. The Roskolniks received the pseudo-Czar with wild enthusiasm. They believed that he had risen from the dead to humiliate the power of the Moscow priests, and that he intended to adopt, instead of the Court religion, that which had been persecuted. On the third day 1500 men accompanied him to battle. The stronghold of Ilecza was the first halting-place he made. It is situated about seventy versts from Jaiczkoï. He was welcomed with open gates and with acclamation, and the guard of the place went over to his side. Here he found guns and powder, and with these he was able to continue his campaign. Next followed the stronghold of Kazizna. This did not surrender of its own accord, but commenced heroically to defend itself, and Pugasceff was compelled to bombard it. In the heat of the siege the rebel Cossacks shouted out to those in the fort, and they actually turned their guns upon their own patrols. All who opposed them were strung up, and the Colonel was taken a prisoner to Pugasceff, who showed no mercy to anyone who wore his hair long, which was the fashion at the time amongst the Russian officers, and for this reason the pseudo-Czar hung every officer who fell into his hands. Now, provided with guns, he made his way towards the fort of Nisnàja Osfernàja, which he also captured after a short attack. Those whom he did not kill joined him.

Now he led 4000 men, and therefore he could dare attack the stronghold of Talitseva, which was defended by two heroes, Bilof and Jelagin. The Russian authorities took up a firm position in face of the fanatical rebels, and they would have repulsed Pugasceff, if the hay stores in the fort had not been burnt down. This fire gave assistance to the rebels. Bilof and Jelagin were driven out of the fort-gates, and were forced out into the plains, where they were slaughtered. When the pseudo-Czar captured the fort of Nisnàja Osfernàja, a marvellously beautiful woman came to him in the market-place and threw herself at his feet. "Mercy, my master!" The woman was very lovely, and was quite in the power of the conqueror. Her tears and excitement made her still more enchanting.

"For whom do you want pardon?"

"For my husband, who is wounded in fighting against you."

"What is the name of your husband?"

"Captain Chalof, who commanded this fort."

A noble-hearted hero no doubt would have set at liberty both husband and wife, let them be happy, and love one another. A base man would have hung the husband and kept the wife. Pugasceff killed them both! He knew very well that there were still many living who remembered that Czar Peter III. was not a man who found pleasure in women's love, and he remained true to his adopted character even in its worst extremes.

The rebels appeared to have wings. After the capture of Talitseva followed that of Csernojeconszka, where the commander took flight on the approach of the rebel leader, and entrusted the defence of the fort to Captain Nilsajeff, who surrendered without firing a shot. Pugasceff, without saying "Thank you," had him hanged. He did not believe in officers who went over to the enemy. He only kept the common soldiers, and he had their hair cut short, so that in the event of their escaping he should know them again! Next morning the last stronghold in the country, Precsisztenszka, situated in the vicinity of the capital, Orenburg, surrendered to the rebels, and in the evening the mock Czar stood before the walls of Orenburg with thirty cannon and a well-equipped army! All this happened in fifteen days.

Since the moment when he carried off the Cossack who had been sent to capture him, and met Kocsenikoff, he had occupied six forts, entirely annihilated a regiment, and created another, with which he now besieged the capital of the province.

The towns of the Russian Empire are divided by great distances, and before things were decided at St. Petersburg, Marquis Pugasceff might almost have occupied half the country. It was Katharine herself who nicknamed Pugasceff Marquis, and she laughed very heartily and often in

the Court circles about her extraordinary husband, who was preparing to reconquer his wife, the Czarina. The nuptial bed awaited him--it was the scaffold!

On the news of Pugasceff's approach, Reinsburg, the Governor of Orenburg, sent, under the command of Colonel Bilof, a portion of his troops to attack the rebel. Bilof started on the chase, but he shared the fate of many lion-hunters. The pursued animal ate him up, and of his entire force not one man returned to Orenburg. Instead of this, Pugasceff's forces appeared before its gates.

Reinsburg did not wish to await the bombardment, and he sent his most trusted regiment, under the command of Major Naumoff, to attack the rebels. The mock-Czar allowed it to approach the slopes of the mountains outside Orenburg, and there, with masked guns, he opened such a disastrous fire upon them that the Russians were compelled to retire to their fort utterly demoralised. Pugasceff then descended into the plains and pitched his camp before the town. The two opponents both began with the idea of tiring each other out by waiting. Pugasceff was encamped on the snow-fields. The plains of Russia are no longer green in October, and instead of tents he had huts made of branches of oak. The one force was attacked by frost--the other by starvation. Finally starvation proved the more powerful. Naumoff sallied from the fort, and turned his attention towards occupying those heights whence his forces had been fired upon a short time previously. He succeeded in making an onslaught with his infantry upon the rebel lines, but Pugasceff, all of a sudden, changed his plan of battle, and attacked with his Cossacks the cavalry of his opponent, who took to flight. The victory fell from the grasp of Naumoff, and he was compelled to fly with his cannon, breaking his way, sword in hand, through the lines of the Cossacks. Then Pugasceff attacked in his turn. He had forty-eight guns, with which he commenced a fierce bombardment of the walls, which continued until November 9th, when he ordered his troops to storm the town. The onslaught did not succeed, for the Russians bravely defended themselves. Pugasceff, therefore, had to make up his mind to starve out his opponents. The broad plains and valleys were white with snow, the forests sparkled with icicles, as though made of silver, and during the long nights the cold reflection of the moon alone brightened the desolate wastes where the audacious dream of a daring man kept awake the spirits of his men. The dream was this: That he should be the husband of the Czarina of All the Russias.

* * * * *

Katharine II. was passionately fond of playing tarok, and she particularly liked that variety of the game which was later on named, after a celebrated Russian general, "Paskevics," and required four players. In addition to the Czarina, Princess Daskoff, Prince Orloff, and General Karr sat at her table. The latter was a distinguished

leader of troops--_in petto_--and as a tarok-player without equal. He rose from the table _semper victor_! No one ever saw him pay, and for this reason he was a particular favourite with the Czarina. She said if she could only once succeed in winning a rouble from Karr she would have a ring welded to it and wear it suspended from her neck. It is very likely that the mistakes of his opponents aided General Karr's continual success. The two noble ladies were too much occupied with Orloff's fine eyes to be able to fix their attention wholly upon the game, whilst Orloff was so lucky in love that it would have been the greatest injustice on earth if he had been equally successful at play. Once, whilst shuffling the cards, some one casually remarked that it was a scandalous shame that an escaped Cossack like Pugasceff should be in a position to conquer a fourth of Russia in Europe, to disgrace the Russian troops time after time, to condemn the finest Russian officers to a degrading death, and now even to bombard Orenburg like a real potentate.

"I know the dandy, I know him very well," said Karr. "During the life of His Majesty I used to play cards with him at Oranienbaum. He is a stupid youngster. Whenever I called _carreau_, he used to give _cœur_."

"It appears that he plays even worse now," said the Czarina; "now he throws _pique_ after _cœur_!"

It was the fashion at this time at the Russian Court to throw in every now and then a French word, and _cœur_ in French means heart, and _piquer_ means to sting and prick.

"Yes, because our commanders have been inactive. Were I only there!"

"Won't you have the kindness to go there?" asked Orloff mockingly.

"If Her Majesty commands me, I am ready."

"Ah! this tarok-party would suffer a too great loss in you," said Katharine, jokingly.

"Well, your Majesty might have hunting-parties at Peterhof," he said, consolingly, to the Czarina.

This was a pleasant suggestion to Katharine, for at Peterhof she had spent her brightest days, and there she had made the acquaintance of Orloff. With a smile full of grace, she nodded to General Karr.

"I don't mind, then; but in two weeks you must be back."

"Ah! what is two weeks?" returned Karr; "if your Majesty commands it, I will seat myself this very hour upon a sledge, and in three days and nights I shall be in Bugulminszka. On the fourth day I shall arrange my

cards, and on the fifth I shall send word to this dandy that I am the challenger. On the sixth day I shall give '_Volat_' [1] to the rascal, and the seventh and eighth days I shall have him as '_Pagato ultimo_' [2] bound in chains, and bring him to your Majesty's feet!"

[Footnote 1: "_Volat_" is an expression used in tarok to denote that no tricks have been made by an opponent.]

[Footnote 2: This is another term in the game, when the player announces beforehand that he will make the last trick with the Ace of Trumps.]

The Czarina burst out laughing at the funny technical expressions used by the General, and entrusted Orloff to provide the celebrated '_Pagato_'-catching General with every necessity. The matter was taken seriously, and Orloff promulgated the imperial '_ukase_', according to which Karr was entrusted with the control of the South Russian troops, and at the same time he announced to him what forces he would have at his command. At Bugulminszka was General Freymann with 20,000 infantry, 2000 cavalry, and thirty-two guns, and he would be reinforced by Colonel Csernicseff, the Governor of Szinbirszk, who had at his command 15,000 horsemen, and twelve guns; while on his way he would meet Colonel Naumann with two detachments of the Body Guard. He was in particular to attach the latter to him, for they were the very flower of the army. Karr left that night. His chief tactics in campaigning consisted in speediness, but it seems that he studied this point badly, for his great predecessors, Alexander the Great, Frederick the Great, Hannibal, &c., also travelled quickly, but in company with an army, whilst Karr thought it quite sufficient if he went alone. He judged it impossible to travel faster than he did, sleighing merrily along to Bugulminszka; but it was possible. A Cossack horseman who started the same time as he did from St. Petersburg, arrived thirty-six hours before him, informed Pugasceff of the coming of General Karr, and acquainted him as to the position of his troops. Pugasceff despatched about 2000 Cossacks to fall upon the rear of the General, and prevent his junction with the Body Guard.

Karr did not consult any one at Bugulminszka. He pushed aside his colleague Freymann in order to be left alone to settle the affair. He said it was not a question of fighting but of chasing. He must be caught alive--this wild animal. Csernicseff was already on the way with 1200 horsemen and twelve guns, as he had received instructions from Karr to cross the river Szakmara and prevent Pugasceff from retreating, while he himself should, with the pick of the regiment, attack him in front and thus catch him between two fires. Csernicseff thought he had to do with clever superiors, and as an ordinary divisional leader he did not dare to think his General to be so ignorant as to allow him to be attacked by the magnificent force of his opponent, nor did he think that Pugasceff would possess such want of tactics as, whilst he saw before him a strong force, to turn with all his troops to annihilate a small detachment. Both these things happened. Pugasceff quietly allowed his opponents to

cross over the frozen river. Then he rushed upon them from both sides. He had the ice broken in their rear, and thus destroyed the entire force, capturing twelve guns. Csernicseff himself, with thirty-five officers, was taken prisoner, and Pugasceff had them all hanged on the trees along the roadway. Then, drunk with victory, he moved with his entire forces against Karr. He, too, was approaching hurriedly, and, thirty-six miles from Bugulminszka, the two forces met in a Cossack village. General Karr was quite astonished to find, instead of an imagined mob, a disciplined army divided into proper detachments, and provided with guns. Freymann advised him, as he had sent away the trusted squadron of Csernicseff, not to commence operations now with the cavalry, to take the village as the basis of his operations, and to use his infantry against the rebels. A series of surprises then befell Karr. He saw the despised rowdy crowd approaching with drawn sabres, he saw the coolness with which they came on in the face of the fiercest musketry fire. He saw the headlong desperation with which they rushed upon his secure position. He recognised that he had found here heroes, instead of thieves. But what annoyed him most was that this rabble knew so well how to handle their cannon; for in St. Petersburg, out of precaution, Cossacks are not enlisted in the artillery, in order that no one should teach them how to serve guns. And here this ignorant people handled the guns, stolen but yesterday, as though accustomed to them all their lifetime, and their shells had already set fire to villages in many different places. The General ordered his entire line to advance with a rush, while with the reserve he sharply attacked the enemy in flank, totally defeating them. His cavalry started with drawn swords towards the fire-spurting space. Amongst the 1500 horsemen there were only 300 Cossacks, and in the heat of battle these deserted to the enemy. Immediately General Karr saw this, he became so alarmed that he set his soldiers the example of flight. All discipline at an end, they abandoned their comrades in front, and escaped as best they could.

Pugasceff's Cossacks pursued the Russians for a distance of thirty miles, but did not succeed in overtaking the General. Fear lent him wings. Arrived at Bugulminszka, he learnt that Csernicseff's horsemen had been destroyed, that the Body Guard in his own rear had been taken prisoners, and that twenty-one guns had fallen into the hands of the rebels. Upon hearing this bad news he was seized with such a bad attack of the _grippe_ that they wrapped him up in pillows and sent him home by sledge to St. Petersburg, where the four-handed card-party awaited him, and that very night he had the misfortune to lose his XXI.[3]; upon which the Czarina made the _bon mot_ that Karr allowed himself twice to lose his XXI. (referring to twenty-one guns), which _bon mot_ caused great merriment at the Russian Court.

[Footnote 3: The card next to the highest in tarok.]

After this victory, Pugasceff's star (if a demon may be said to possess one) attained its meridian. Perhaps it might have risen yet higher had

he remained faithful to his gigantic missions, and had he not forgotten the two passions which had led him on with such astonishing rapidity--the one being to make the Czarina his wife, the other, to crush the Russian aristocracy. Which of these two ideas was the boldest? He was only separated from their realisation by a transparent film.

After Karr's defeat he had an open road to Moscow, where his appearance was awaited by 100,000 serfs burning to shake off the yoke of the aristocracy, and form a new Russian empire. Forty million helots awaited their liberator in the rebel leader. Then, of a sudden, he cast away from him the common sense he had possessed until now--for the sake of a pair of beautiful eyes!

After the victory of Bugulminszka a large number of _envoyés_ from the leaders of the Baskirs appeared before him, and brought him, together with their allegiance, a pretty girl to be his wife.

The name of the maiden was Ulijanka, and she stole the heart of Pugasceff from the Czarina. At that time the adventurer believed so fully in his star that he did not behave with his usual severity. Ulijanka became his favourite, and the adventurous chief appointed Salavatké, her father, to be the ruling Prince of Baskirk. Then he commenced to surround himself with Counts and Princes. Out of the booty of plundered castles he clothed himself in magnificent Court costumes, and loaded his companions with decorations taken from the heroic Russian officers. He nominated them Generals, Colonels, Counts, and Princes. The Cossack, Csika, his first soldier, was appointed _Generalissimus_, and to him he entrusted half his army. He also issued roubles with his portrait under the name of Czar Peter III., and sent out a circular note with the words, "_Redevivus et ultor_." As he had no silver mines, he struck the roubles out of copper, of which there was plenty about. This good example was also followed by the Russians, who issued roubles to the amount of millions and millions, and made payments with them generously. Pugasceff now turned the romance of the insurrection into the parody of a reign. Instead of advancing against the unprotected cities of the Russian Empire, he attacked the defended strongholds, and, in the place of pursuing the fairy picture of his dreams which had led him thus far, he laid himself down in the mud by the side of a common woman!

Generalissimus Csika was instructed to occupy the fort Ufa, with the troops who were entrusted to his care. The time was January, 1774, and it was so terribly cold that nothing like it had been recorded in Russian chronicles. The trees of the forest split with a noise as though a battle were proceeding, and the wild fowl fell to the ground along the roads.

To carry on a siege under such circumstances was impossible. The hardened earth would not permit the digging of trenches, and it was

impossible to camp on the frozen ground.

The two rebel chiefs occupied the neighbouring towns, and so cut off all supplies from the neighbouring forests. In Orenburg they had already eaten up the horses belonging to the garrison, and a certain Kicskoff, the commissary, invented the idea of boiling the skins of the slaughtered animals, cutting them into small slices and mixing them with paste, which food was distributed amongst the soldiers, and gave rise to the breaking out of a scorbutic disease in the fort which rendered half the garrison incapable of work. On January the 13th, Colonel Vallenstierna tried to break his way through the rebel lines with 2500 men, but he returned with hardly seventy. The remainder, about 2000 men, remained on the field. At any rate, they no longer asked for food! A few hundred hussars, however, cut their way through and carried to St. Petersburg the news of what Czar Peter III. (who had now risen for the seventh time from his grave) was doing! The Czarina commenced to get tired of her adorer's conquests, so she called together her faithful generals, and asked which of them thought it possible to undertake a campaign in the depth of the Russian winter into the interior of the Russian snow deserts. This did not mean playing at war, nor a triumphal procession. It meant a battle with a furious people who, in forty years' time, would trample upon the most powerful European troops. There were four who replied that in Russia everything was possible which ought to be done. The names of these four gentlemen were: Prince Galiczin, General Bibikoff, Colonel Larionoff, and Michelson, a Swedish officer. Their number, however, was soon reduced to two at the very commencement. Larionoff returned home after the first battle of Bozal, where the rebels proved victorious, whilst Bibikoff died from the hardships of the winter campaign.

Galiczin and Michelson alone remained. The Swede had already gained fame in the Turkish campaign from his swift and daring deeds, and when he started from the Fort of Bozal against the rebels his sole troops consisted of 400 hussars and 600 infantry, with four guns. With this small force he started to the relief of the Fort of Ufa. Quickly as he proceeded, Csika's spies were quicker still, and the rebel leader was informed of the approach of the small body of the enemy. As he expected that they only intended to reinforce the garrison of Ufa, he merely sent against them 3000 men, with nine guns, to occupy the mountain passes through which they would march on their way to Ufa. But Michelson did not go to Ufa as was expected. He seated his men on sledges, and flew along the plains to Csika's splendid camp. So unexpected, so daring, so little to be credited was this move of his, that when he fell on Csika's vanguard at one o'clock one morning nobody opposed him. The alarmed rebels hurried headlong to the camp, and left two guns in the hands of Michelson. The Swedish hero knew well enough that the 3000 men of the enemy who occupied the mountain pass would at once appear in answer to the sound of the guns, and that he would thus be caught between two fires; so he hastily directed his men to entrench themselves beneath

their sledges in the road, and left two hundred infantry with two guns to defend them, whilst with the remaining troops he made his way towards the town of Csernakuka, whither Csika's troops had fled. Michelson saw that he had no time to lose. He placed himself at the head of his hussars, sounded the charge, and attacked the bulk of his opponents. For this they were not prepared. The bold attack caused confusion amongst them, and in a few moments the centre of the camp was cut through, and the first battery captured. He then immediately turned his attention to the two wings of the camp. After this, flight became general, and Csika's troops were dispersed like a cloud of mosquitos, leaving behind them forty-eight cannon and eight small guns. The victor now returned with his small body of troops to the sledges they had left behind, and he then entirely surrounded the 3000 rebels. Those who were not slaughtered were captured. The victorious hero sent word to the commander of the Ufa garrison that the road was clear, and that the cannon taken from his opponents should be drawn thither. A hundred and twenty versts from Ufa he reached the flying Csika. The Generalissimus then had only forty-two officers, whilst his privates had disappeared in every direction of the wind. Michelson got hold of them all, and if he did not hang them it was only because on the six days' desert march not a single tree was to be found. In the meantime, Prince Galiczin, whose troops consisted of 6000 men, went in pursuit of Pugasceff. On this miserable route he did not encounter the mock Czar until the beginning of March. Pugasceff waited for his opponent in the forest of Taticseva. This so-called stronghold had only wooden walls, a kind of ancient fencing. It was good enough to protect the sheep from the pillaging Baskirs, but it was not suitable for war. The genius of the rebel leader did not desert him, and he was well able to look after himself. Round the fences he dug trenches, where he piled up the snow, on which he poured water. This, after being frozen, turned almost into stone, and was, at the same time, so slippery that no one could climb over it. Here he awaited Galiczin with a portion of his troops, while the remainder occupied Orenburg. The Russian general approached the hiding-place of the mock Czar cautiously. The thick fog was of service to him, and the two opponents only perceived one another when they were standing at firing distance. A furious hand-to-hand fight ensued. The best of the rebel troops were there. Pugasceff was always in the front and where the danger was greatest, but finally the Russians climbed the ice-bulwarks, captured his guns, and drove him out of the forest. This victory cost the life of 1000 heroic Russians, but it was a complete one! Pugasceff abandoned the field with 4000 men and seven guns; but what was a greater loss still than his army and his guns, was that of the superstitious glamour which had surrounded him until now. The belief in his incapability of defeat, that was lost too! The revengeful Czar who had but yesterday commenced his campaign, now had to fly to the desert, which promised him no refuge. It was only then that the real horrors of the campaign commenced. It was a war such as can be imagined in Russia only, where in the thousands and thousands of square miles of borderless desert scantily distributed hordes wander about, all hating Russian

supremacy, and all born gun in hand. Pugasceff took refuge amongst these people. Once again he turned on Galiczin at Kargozki. He was again defeated, and lost his last gun. His sweetheart, Ulijanka, was also taken captive--that is, if she did not betray him! From here he escaped precipitately with his cavalry across the river Mjaes.

Here Siberia commences, and here Russia has no longer villages, but only military settlements which are divided from each other by a day's march, across plains and the ancient forests, along the ranges of the Ural Mountains--the so-called factories.

The Woszkrezenszki factory, situated one day's walk into the desert, is divided by uncut forests from the Szimszki factory, in both of which cinnamon and tin paints are made, and here are to be seen the powder factory of Usiska and the bomb factory of Szatkin, where the exiled Russian convicts work. At the meeting of the rivers are the small towns of Stepnàja, Troiczka Uszt, Magitnàja, Petroluskàja, Kojelga, guarded by native Cossacks, whilst others are garrisoned by disgraced battalions. Hither came Pugasceff with the remnants of his army. Galiczin pursued him for some time, but finally came to the conclusion that in this uninhabited country, where the solitary road is only indicated by snow-covered trenches, he could not, with his regular troops, reach an opponent whose tactics were to run away, as far and as fast as possible.

Pugasceff rallied to him all the tribes along the Ural district, who deserted their homesteads and followed him.

The winter suddenly disappeared, and those mild, short April days commenced which one can only realise in Siberia, when at night the water freezes, while in the daytime the melting snow covers the expanse of waste, every mountain stream becomes a torrent, and the traveller finds in the place of every brook a vast sea. The runaway might still proceed by sledge, but the pursuer would only find before him fathomless morasses. Only one leader had the courage to pursue Pugasceff even into this land--this was Michelson. Just as the Siberian wolf who has tasted the blood of the wild boar does not swerve from the track, but pursues him even amongst reeds and morasses, so the daring leader chased his opponent from plain to plain. He never had more than 1000 men, cavalry, artillery, and gunners all told. Every one had to carry provisions for two weeks, and 100 cartridges. The cavalry had guns as well as sabres, so that they might also fight on foot, and the artillery were supplied with axes, so that, if necessary, they might serve as carpenters, and all prepared to swim should the necessity arise. With this small force Michelson followed Pugasceff amid the horde of insurrectionary tribes, surrounded on every side by people upon whose mercy he could not count, whose language he did not understand, and whose motto was death. Yet he went amongst them in cold blood, as the sailor braves the terrors of the ocean. On the 7th of May he was attacked by the father of the pretty Ulijanka, near the Szimszki factory, with 2000 Baskirs, who were about

to join Pugasceff. Michelson dispersed them, captured their guns, and discovered from the Baskir captives that Beloborodoff, one of the dukes created by Pugasceff, was approaching with a large force of renegade Russian soldiers. Michelson caught up with them near the Jeresen stream, and drove them into the Szatkin factory. Riding all by himself, so close to them that his voice could be heard, he commenced by admonishing them to rejoin the standard of the Czarina. He was fired at more than 2000 times from the windows of the factory, but when they saw that he was invulnerable they suddenly threw open the gates and joined his forces. From them he discovered the whereabouts of the mock Czar, who had at the time once more recovered himself, had captured three strongholds, Magitnàja, Stepnàja, and Petroluskàja, and was just then besieging Troiczka. This place he took before the arrival of Michelson, who found in lieu of a stronghold nothing but ruins, dead bodies, and Russian officers hanging from the trees. Pugasceff heard of the approach of his opponent, and, with savage cunning, laid a snare to capture the daring pursuer. He dressed his soldiers in the uniforms of the dead Russian soldiers, and sent messengers to Michelson in the name of Colonel Colon that he should join him beyond Varlamora. Michelson only perceived the trick when his vanguard was attacked and two of his guns captured.

Although surrounded, he immediately fell upon the flower of Pugasceff's guard, and cut his way through just where the enemy was strongest. The net was torn asunder. It was not strong enough. Pugasceff fled before Michelson, and, with a few hundred followers, escaped into the interior of Siberia, near the lake of Arga. All of a sudden Michelson found Szalavatka at his rear with Baskir troops who had already captured the Szatkin factory, and put to the sword men, women, and children. Michelson turned back suddenly, and found the Baskir camp strongly intrenched near the river Aj. The enemy had destroyed the bridges over the river, and confidently awaited the Imperial troops. At daybreak Michelson ordered up forty horsemen and placed a rifleman behind the saddle of each, telling them to swim the river and defend themselves until the remainder of the troops joined them. His commands were carried out to the letter amidst the most furious firing of the enemy, and the Russians gained the other side of the river without a bridge, drawing with them their cannon bound to trees. The Baskirs were dispersed and fled, but whilst Michelson was pursuing them with his cavalry he received news that his artillery was attacked by a fresh force, and he had to return to their aid. Pugasceff himself, who again was the aggressor, stood with a regular army on the plains. The battle lasted till late at night in the forest. Finally the rebels retreated, and Michelson discovered that his opponents meant to take by surprise the Fort of Ufa. He speedily cut his way through the forest, and when Pugasceff thought himself a day's distance from his opponent, he found him face to face outside the Fort of Ufa. Michelson proved again victorious, but by this time his soldiers had not a decent piece of clothing left, nor a wearable shoe, and each man had not more than two charges. He therefore had to retreat to Ufa for fresh ammunition. It

appears that Michelson was just such a dreaded opponent to Pugasceff as the man not born of a woman was to Macbeth. Immediately he disappeared from the horizon, he arose anew, and at each encounter with the pretender beat him right and left. When Michelson drove him away from Ufa, Pugasceff totally defeated the Russian leaders approaching from other directions, London, Melgunoff, Duve, and Jacobovics were swept away before him, and he burnt before their very eyes the town of Birszk. With drawn sword he occupied the stronghold of Ossa, where he acquired guns, and, advancing with lightning rapidity, he stood before Kazan, which is one of the most noted towns of the province; it is the seat of an Archbishop, and there is kept the crown which the Russian Czars use at their coronation. This crown was required by the mock Czar. If he could get hold of it, and the Archbishop of Kazan would place it on his head, who could deny that he was the anointed Czar? Generals Brand and Banner had but 1500 musketry for the defence of Kazan, but the citizens of the town took also to the guns to defend themselves from within their ancient walls. The day before the bombardment, General Potemkin, accompanied by General Larionoff, arrived at Kazan. The Imperialists had as many generals and colonels in their camp as Pugasceff had corporals who had deserted their colours, yet the horde led by the rebel stormed the stronghold of the generals. Pugasceff was the first to scale the wall, standard in hand, upon which the generals took refuge in the citadel. Larionoff fled, and on his flight to Nijni Novgorod did not once look back.

Pugasceff captured the town of Kazan, and gave it up to pillage. The Archbishop of Kazan received him before the cathedral, bestowed upon him gold to the value of half-a-million roubles, and promised that he would place the crown on his head immediately he procured it; it being in the citadel. Pugasceff set fire to the town in all directions, as he wanted to effect the surrender of the citadel garrison by that means. Just at this moment Michelson was on his way. The heroic General hardly allowed his troops time for rest, but again started in pursuit of Pugasceff. No news of him was heard, his footsteps alone could be traced. At Burnova he was attacked by a gang of rebels, whom he dispersed, but they were not the troops of Pugasceff. At Brajevana he came upon a detachment, but this also was not the one he was looking for. He then turned towards the Fort of Ossa, where he found a group of Baskir horsemen, whom he dispersed, capturing many others, from whom he learnt that Pugasceff had crossed the river Kuma; and he knew that he would find the rebel at Kazan. He hastened after him, meeting right and left with camps and troops belonging to his adventurous opponent. He found no boats on the river Kuma, so he swam it. Two other rivers lay in his way, but neither of these prevented his progress, and when he arrived at Arksz he heard firing in the direction of Kazan. Allowing but one hour's repose to his troops, he marched through the night, and at daybreak the thick dark smoke on the horizon told him that Kazan was in flames. Pugasceff's patrols communicated to their leader that Michelson was again at hand. The mock Czar cursed upon hearing the news. Was it a devil who was again

at his heels, when he believed him 300 miles off? He decided that this must not be known to the garrison, who had been forced into the citadel. He collected from his troops those whom he could spare, and stationed them in the town of Taziczin, seven miles from Kazan, to prevent the advance of the dreaded enemy. Just as he was proclaiming himself Czar Peter III. in the market-place of Taziczin, a miserable-looking woman rushed in, and fell at his feet, embracing him, and covering him with kisses. This woman was Pugasceff's wife, who thought her husband lost long ago. They had been married very young, and Pugasceff himself believed her no longer living, but the poor woman recognised him by his voice. Pugasceff did not lose his presence of mind, but, gently lifting the woman up, he said to his officers:--"Look after this woman; her husband was a great friend of mine and I owe him much." But every one knew that the sham-Czar was no other than the husband of Marianka, and no doubt the appearance of the peasant woman told on the spirits of the insurgent troops. The most bitter and decisive battle of the insurrection awaited them. The night divided the two armies, and it was only in the morning that Michelson could force his way into the town, whence he sent word to the people of Kazan to come to his assistance. Pugasceff again attacked him with embittered fury, and as he could not dislodge him he withdrew the remainder of his troops from Kazan and encamped on the plain. The third day of the battle, fortune turned to the side of Pugasceff. They fought for four hours, and Michelson was already surrounded, when the hero put himself at the head of his small army and made a desperate rush upon Pugasceff.

The insurrectionary forces were broken asunder. They left 3000 men on the battlefield, and 5000 captives fell into the hands of the victors.

Kazan was free, but the Russian empire was not so yet.

Pugasceff, trodden a hundred times to the ground, rose once more. After his defeat at Kazan, he fled, not towards the interior of Siberia, but straight towards the heart of the Russian empire--towards Moscow. Out of his army which was split asunder at Kazan he formed 100 battalions, and with a small number of these, crossed the Volga. Immediately he appeared on the opposite banks of the river, the entire province was enkindled: the peasantry rose in revolt against the aristocracy. Within a district of 100 miles every castle was destroyed, and one town after the other opened its gates to the mock Czar. The further he advanced the more his army increased and the faster his insurrectionary red flag travelled towards the gates of Moscow. On their way the rebels occupied forts, pillaged and destroyed the towns, and the troops which were sent against them were captured. Before the Fort of Zariczin an Imperial force challenged their advance. In the ensuing battle, every Russian officer fell, and the entire force was captured. Again Pugasceff had 25,000 men and a large number of guns, and his road would have been clear to Moscow if the ubiquitous Michelson had not been at his back! This wonderful hero did not dread his opponents, however numerous, and like the panther

which drives before him the herd of buffaloes, so he drove with his small body Pugasceff's tremendous army. The rebel felt that this man had a magic power over him, and that he was in league with fate. Finally, he found a convenient place outside Sarepta, and here he awaited his opponent. It is a height which a steep mountain footpath divides, and this path is intersected by another. Pugasceff placed a portion of his best troops on the ascending path, whilst to the riff-raff he entrusted his two wings. If Michelson had caught the bull by the horns with his ordinary tactics, he ought to have cut through the little footpath leading to the steep road, and if he had succeeded then, the troops which were at the point of intersection would have fallen between two fires, from which they could not have escaped. But Michelson changed his system of attack. Whilst the bombardment was going on, he, together with Colonel Melin, rushed upon the wings of the opposing forces. Pugasceff saw himself fall into the pit he had dug for others. The rebel army, terror-struck, rushed towards his camp. The forces that flew to his rescue fell at the mouth of his guns, and he had to cut his way through his own troops in order to escape from the trap. This was his last battle! He escaped with sixty men, crossed the Volga, and hid amongst the bushes of an uninhabited plain.

The Russian troops surrounded the plain, whence Pugasceff and his men could not escape. And yet he still dreamt of future glory! Amidst the great desert his old ambition came back to him--he pictured the golden dome of the Kremlin, and the conquered Czarina. And with these dreams he suffered the tortures of hunger. For days and days he had no nourishment but horse-flesh roasted on the reeds, which was made palatable by meadow-grass in place of salt. One night, as he was sitting over the fire and roasting his meagre dinner on a wooden spit, one of the three Cossacks who formed his body-guard said to him, "You have played your comedy long enough, Pugasceff!" The adventurer sprang up from his place.

"Slave, I am your Czar!" and whilst saying this he slew the speaker. The two others made a rush at him, struck him to the ground, bound him, tied him to a horse, and thus took him to Ural Sorodok and delivered him to General Szuvarof. It was the very same Ural Sorodok whence he had started upon his bold undertaking. From here he was taken to Moscow. The sentence passed upon him was that he should be cut up alive into small pieces. The Czarina confirmed the sentence, though her beautiful eyes had had great share of responsibility for the sinner's fate. The hangman was more merciful. It was not specified in the sentence where he should commence the work of slaughter, so he began at once with the head, and for this oversight he was sent to Siberia! Katharine about this time changed her favourite. Instead of Orloff, Potemkin, a fine fellow, was chosen.

THE DIAMOND AS BIG AS THE RITZ

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Tales of the Jazz Age*, by F. Scott Fitzgerald

1

John T. Unger came from a family that had been well known in Hades--a small town on the Mississippi River--for several generations. John's father had held the amateur golf championship through many a heated contest; Mrs. Unger was known "from hot-box to hot-bed," as the local phrase went, for her political addresses; and young John T. Unger, who had just turned sixteen, had danced all the latest dances from New York before he put on long trousers. And now, for a certain time, he was to be away from home. That respect for a New England education which is the bane of all provincial places, which drains them yearly of their most promising young men, had seized upon his parents. Nothing would suit them but that he should go to St. Midas's School near Boston--Hades was too small to hold their darling and gifted son.

Now in Hades--as you know if you ever have been there--the names of the more fashionable preparatory schools and colleges mean very little. The inhabitants have been so long out of the world that, though they make a show of keeping up-to-date in dress and manners and literature, they depend to a great extent on hearsay, and a function that in Hades would be considered elaborate would doubtless be hailed by a Chicago beef-princess as "perhaps a little tacky."

John T. Unger was on the eve of departure. Mrs. Unger, with maternal fatuity, packed his trunks full of linen suits and electric fans, and Mr. Unger presented his son with an asbestos pocket-book stuffed with money.

"Remember, you are always welcome here," he said. "You can be sure, boy, that we'll keep the home fires burning."

"I know," answered John huskily.

"Don't forget who you are and where you come from," continued his father proudly, "and you can do nothing to harm you. You are an Unger--from Hades."

So the old man and the young shook hands, and John walked away with tears streaming from his eyes. Ten minutes later he had passed outside the city limits and he stopped to glance back for the last time. Over the gates the old-fashioned Victorian motto seemed strangely attractive to him. His father had tried time and time again to have it

changed to something with a little more push and verve about it, such as "Hades--Your Opportunity," or else a plain "Welcome" sign set over a hearty handshake pricked out in electric lights. The old motto was a little depressing, Mr. Unger had thought--but now

So John took his look and then set his face resolutely toward his destination. And, as he turned away, the lights of Hades against the sky seemed full of a warm and passionate beauty.

* * * * *

St. Midas's School is half an hour from Boston in a Rolls-Pierce motor-car. The actual distance will never be known, for no one, except John T. Unger, had ever arrived there save in a Rolls-Pierce and probably no one ever will again. St. Midas's is the most expensive and the most exclusive boys' preparatory school in the world.

John's first two years there passed pleasantly. The fathers of all the boys were money-kings, and John spent his summer visiting at fashionable resorts. While he was very fond of all the boys he visited, their fathers struck him as being much of a piece, and in his boyish way he often wondered at their exceeding sameness. When he told them where his home was they would ask jovially, "Pretty hot down there?" and John would muster a faint smile and answer, "It certainly is." His response would have been heartier had they not all made this joke--at best varying it with, "Is it hot enough for you down there?" which he hated just as much.

In the middle of his second year at school, a quiet, handsome boy named Percy Washington had been put in John's form. The new-comer was pleasant in his manner and exceedingly well dressed even for St. Midas's, but for some reason he kept aloof from the other boys. The only person with whom he was intimate was John T. Unger, but even to John he was entirely uncommunicative concerning his home or his family. That he was wealthy went without saying, but beyond a few such deductions John knew little of his friend, so it promised rich confectionery for his curiosity when Percy invited him to spend the summer at his home "in the West." He accepted, without hesitation.

It was only when they were in the train that Percy became, for the first time, rather communicative. One day while they were eating lunch in the dining-car and discussing the imperfect characters of several of the boys at school, Percy suddenly changed his tone and made an abrupt remark.

"My father," he said, "is by far the richest man in the world."

"Oh," said John politely. He could think of no answer to make to this confidence. He considered "That's very nice," but it sounded hollow

and was on the point of saying, "Really?" but refrained since it would seem to question Percy's statement. And such an astounding statement could scarcely be questioned.

"By far the richest," repeated Percy.

"I was reading in the _World Almanac_" began John, "that there was one man in America with an income of over five million a years and four men with incomes of over three million a year, and---"

"Oh, they're nothing." Percy's mouth was a half-moon of scorn. "Catch-penny capitalists, financial small-fry, petty merchants and money-lenders. My father could buy them out and not know he'd done it."

"But how does he---"

"Why haven't they put down _his_ income-tax? Because he doesn't pay any. At least he pays a little one--but he doesn't pay any on his _real_ income."

"He must be very rich," said John simply, "I'm glad. I like very rich people.

"The richer a fella is, the better I like him." There was a look of passionate frankness upon his dark face. "I visited the Schnlitzer-Murphys last Easter. Vivian Schnlitzer-Murphy had rubies as big as hen's eggs, and sapphires that were like globes with lights inside them---"

"I love jewels," agreed Percy enthusiastically. "Of course I wouldn't want any one at school to know about it, but I've got quite a collection myself. I used to collect them instead of stamps."

"And diamonds," continued John eagerly. "The Schnlitzer-Murphys had diamonds as big as walnuts---"

"That's nothing." Percy had leaned forward and dropped his voice to a low whisper. "That's nothing at all. My father has a diamond bigger than the Ritz-Carlton Hotel."

2

The Montana sunset lay between two mountains like a gigantic bruise from which dark arteries spread themselves over a poisoned sky. An immense distance under the sky crouched the village of Fish, minute, dismal, and forgotten. There were twelve men, so it was said, in the village of Fish, twelve sombre and inexplicable souls who sucked a

lean milk from the almost literally bare rock upon which a mysterious populatory force had begotten them. They had become a race apart, these twelve men of Fish, like some species developed by an early whim of nature, which on second thought had abandoned them to struggle and extermination.

Out of the blue-black bruise in the distance crept a long line of moving lights upon the desolation of the land, and the twelve men of Fish gathered like ghosts at the shanty depot to watch the passing of the seven o'clock train, the Transcontinental Express from Chicago. Six times or so a year the Transcontinental Express, through some inconceivable jurisdiction, stopped at the village of Fish, and when this occurred a figure or so would disembark, mount into a buggy that always appeared from out of the dusk, and drive off toward the bruised sunset. The observation of this pointless and preposterous phenomenon had become a sort of cult among the men of Fish. To observe, that was all; there remained in them none of the vital quality of illusion which would make them wonder or speculate, else a religion might have grown up around these mysterious visitations. But the men of Fish were beyond all religion--the barest and most savage tenets of even Christianity could gain no foothold on that barren rock--so there was no altar, no priest, no sacrifice; only each night at seven the silent concourse by the shanty depot, a congregation who lifted up a prayer of dim, anaemic wonder.

On this June night, the Great Brakeman, whom, had they deified any one, they might well have chosen as their celestial protagonist, had ordained that the seven o'clock train should leave its human (or inhuman) deposit at Fish. At two minutes after seven Percy Washington and John T. Unger disembarked, hurried past the spellbound, the agape, the fearsome eyes of the twelve men of Fish, mounted into a buggy which had obviously appeared from nowhere, and drove away.

After half an hour, when the twilight had coagulated into dark, the silent negro who was driving the buggy hailed an opaque body somewhere ahead of them in the gloom. In response to his cry, it turned upon them a luminous disc which regarded them like a malignant eye out of the unfathomable night. As they came closer, John saw that it was the tail-light of an immense automobile, larger and more magnificent than any he had ever seen. Its body was of gleaming metal richer than nickel and lighter than silver, and the hubs of the wheels were studded with iridescent geometric figures of green and yellow--John did not dare to guess whether they were glass or jewel.

Two negroes, dressed in glittering livery such as one sees in pictures of royal processions in London, were standing at attention beside the car and, as the two young men dismounted from the buggy, they were greeted in some language which the guest could not understand, but which seemed to be an extreme form of the Southern negro's dialect.

"Get in," said Percy to his friend, as their trunks were tossed to the ebony roof of the limousine. "Sorry we had to bring you this far in that buggy, but of course it wouldn't do for the people on the train or those God-forsaken fellas in Fish to see this automobile."

"Gosh! What a car!" This ejaculation was provoked by its interior. John saw that the upholstery consisted of a thousand minute and exquisite tapestries of silk, woven with jewels and embroideries, and set upon a background of cloth of gold. The two armchair seats in which the boys luxuriated were covered with stuff that resembled duvetyn, but seemed woven in numberless colours of the ends of ostrich feathers.

"What a car!" cried John again, in amazement.

"This thing?" Percy laughed. "Why, it's just an old junk we use for a station wagon."

By this time they were gliding along through the darkness toward the break between the two mountains.

"We'll be there in an hour and a half," said Percy, looking at the clock. "I may as well tell you it's not going to be like anything you ever saw before."

If the car was any indication of what John would see, he was prepared to be astonished indeed. The simple piety prevalent in Hades has the earnest worship of and respect for riches as the first article of its creed--had John felt otherwise than radiantly humble before them, his parents would have turned away in horror at the blasphemy.

They had now reached and were entering the break between the two mountains and almost immediately the way became much rougher.

"If the moon shone down here, you'd see that we're in a big gulch," said Percy, trying to peer out of the window. He spoke a few words into the mouthpiece and immediately the footman turned on a searchlight and swept the hillsides with an immense beam.

"Rocky, you see. An ordinary car would be knocked to pieces in half an hour. In fact, it'd take a tank to navigate it unless you knew the way. You notice we're going uphill now."

They were obviously ascending, and within a few minutes the car was crossing a high rise, where they caught a glimpse of a pale moon newly risen in the distance. The car stopped suddenly and several figures took shape out of the dark beside it--these were negroes also. Again the two young men were saluted in the same dimly recognisable dialect;

then the negroes set to work and four immense cables dangling from overhead were attached with hooks to the hubs of the great jewelled wheels. At a resounding "Hey-yah!" John felt the car being lifted slowly from the ground--up and up--clear of the tallest rocks on both sides--then higher, until he could see a wavy, moonlit valley stretched out before him in sharp contrast to the quagmire of rocks that they had just left. Only on one side was there still rock--and then suddenly there was no rock beside them or anywhere around.

It was apparent that they had surmounted some immense knife-blade of stone, projecting perpendicularly into the air. In a moment they were going down again, and finally with a soft bump they were landed upon the smooth earth.

"The worst is over," said Percy, squinting out the window. "It's only five miles from here, and our own road--tapestry brick--all the way. This belongs to us. This is where the United States ends, father says."

"Are we in Canada?"

"We are not. We're in the middle of the Montana Rockies. But you are now on the only five square miles of land in the country that's never been surveyed."

"Why hasn't it? Did they forget it?"

"No," said Percy, grinning, "they tried to do it three times. The first time my grandfather corrupted a whole department of the State survey; the second time he had the official maps of the United States tinkered with--that held them for fifteen years. The last time was harder. My father fixed it so that their compasses were in the strongest magnetic field ever artificially set up. He had a whole set of surveying instruments made with a slight defection that would allow for this territory not to appear, and he substituted them for the ones that were to be used. Then he had a river deflected and he had what looked like a village up on its banks--so that they'd see it, and think it was a town ten miles farther up the valley. There's only one thing my father's afraid of," he concluded, "only one thing in the world that could be used to find us out."

"What's that?"

Percy sank his voice to a whisper.

"Aeroplanes," he breathed. "We've got half a dozen anti-aircraft guns and we've arranged it so far--but there've been a few deaths and a great many prisoners. Not that we mind _that_, you know, father and I, but it upsets mother and the girls, and there's always the

chance that some time we won't be able to arrange it."

Shreds and tatters of chinchilla, courtesy clouds in the green moon's heaven, were passing the green moon like precious Eastern stuffs paraded for the inspection of some Tartar Khan. It seemed to John that it was day, and that he was looking at some lads sailing above him in the air, showering down tracts and patent medicine circulars, with their messages of hope for despairing, rock-bound hamlets. It seemed to him that he could see them look down out of the clouds and stare--and stare at whatever there was to stare at in this place whither he was bound--What then? Were they induced to land by some insidious device to be immured far from patent medicines and from tracts until the judgment day--or, should they fail to fall into the trap, did a quick puff of smoke and the sharp round of a splitting shell bring them drooping to earth--and "upset" Percy's mother and sisters. John shook his head and the wraith of a hollow laugh issued silently from his parted lips. What desperate transaction lay hidden here? What a moral expedient of a bizarre Croesus? What terrible and golden mystery?...

The chinchilla clouds had drifted past now and, outside the Montana night was bright as day the tapestry brick of the road was smooth to the tread of the great tyres as they rounded a still, moonlit lake; they passed into darkness for a moment, a pine grove, pungent and cool, then they came out into a broad avenue of lawn, and John's exclamation of pleasure was simultaneous with Percy's taciturn "We're home."

Full in the light of the stars, an exquisite chateau rose from the borders of the lake, climbed in marble radiance half the height of an adjoining mountain, then melted in grace, in perfect symmetry, in translucent feminine languor, into the massed darkness of a forest of pine. The many towers, the slender tracery of the sloping parapets, the chiselled wonder of a thousand yellow windows with their oblongs and hexagons and triangles of golden light, the shattered softness of the intersecting planes of star-shine and blue shade, all trembled on John's spirit like a chord of music. On one of the towers, the tallest, the blackest at its base, an arrangement of exterior lights at the top made a sort of floating fairyland--and as John gazed up in warm enchantment the faint acciaccare sound of violins drifted down in a rococo harmony that was like nothing he had ever heard before. Then in a moment the car stepped before wide, high marble steps around which the night air was fragrant with a host of flowers. At the top of the steps two great doors swung silently open and amber light flooded out upon the darkness, silhouetting the figure of an exquisite lady with black, high-piled hair, who held out her arms toward them.

"Mother," Percy was saying, "this is my friend, John Unger, from Hades."

Afterward John remembered that first night as a daze of many colours, of quick sensory impressions, of music soft as a voice in love, and of the beauty of things, lights and shadows, and motions and faces. There was a white-haired man who stood drinking a many-hued cordial from a crystal thimble set on a golden stem. There was a girl with a flowery face, dressed like Titania with braided sapphires in her hair. There was a room where the solid, soft gold of the walls yielded to the pressure of his hand, and a room that was like a platonic conception of the ultimate prison--ceiling, floor, and all, it was lined with an unbroken mass of diamonds, diamonds of every size and shape, until, lit with tail violet lamps in the corners, it dazzled the eyes with a whiteness that could be compared only with itself, beyond human wish, or dream.

Through a maze of these rooms the two boys wandered. Sometimes the floor under their feet would flame in brilliant patterns from lighting below, patterns of barbaric clashing colours, of pastel delicacy, of sheer whiteness, or of subtle and intricate mosaic, surely from some mosque on the Adriatic Sea. Sometimes beneath layers of thick crystal he would see blue or green water swirling, inhabited by vivid fish and growths of rainbow foliage. Then they would be treading on furs of every texture and colour or along corridors of palest ivory, unbroken as though carved complete from the gigantic tusks of dinosaurs extinct before the age of man

Then a hazily remembered transition, and they were at dinner--where each plate was of two almost imperceptible layers of solid diamond between which was curiously worked a filigree of emerald design, a shaving sliced from green air. Music, plangent and unobtrusive, drifted down through far corridors--his chair, feathered and curved insidiously to his back, seemed to engulf and overpower him as he drank his first glass of port. He tried drowsily to answer a question that had been asked him, but the honeyed luxury that clasped his body added to the illusion of sleep--jewels, fabrics, wines, and metals blurred before his eyes into a sweet mist

"Yes," he replied with a polite effort, "it certainly is hot enough for me down there."

He managed to add a ghostly laugh; then, without movement, without resistance, he seemed to float off and away, leaving an iced dessert that was pink as a dream He fell asleep.

When he awoke he knew that several hours had passed. He was in a great quiet room with ebony walls and a dull illumination that was too faint, too subtle, to be called a light. His young host was standing over him.

"You fell asleep at dinner," Percy was saying. "I nearly did, too--it was such a treat to be comfortable again after this year of school. Servants undressed and bathed you while you were sleeping."

"Is this a bed or a cloud?" sighed John. "Percy, Percy--before you go, I want to apologise."

"For what?"

"For doubting you when you said you had a diamond as big as the Ritz-Carlton Hotel."

Percy smiled.

"I thought you didn't believe me. It's that mountain, you know."

"What mountain?"

"The mountain the chateau rests on. It's not very big, for a mountain. But except about fifty feet of sod and gravel on top it's solid diamond. One diamond, one cubic mile without a flaw. Aren't you listening? Say----"

But John T. Unger had again fallen asleep.

3

Morning. As he awoke he perceived drowsily that the room had at the same moment become dense with sunlight. The ebony panels of one wall had slid aside on a sort of track, leaving his chamber half open to the day. A large negro in a white uniform stood beside his bed.

"Good-evening," muttered John, summoning his brains from the wild places.

"Good-morning, sir. Are you ready for your bath, sir? Oh, don't get up--I'll put you in, if you'll just unbutton your pyjamas--there. Thank you, sir."

John lay quietly as his pyjamas were removed--he was amused and delighted; he expected to be lifted like a child by this black Gargantua who was tending him, but nothing of the sort happened; instead he felt the bed tilt up slowly on its side--he began to roll, startled at first, in the direction of the wall, but when he reached the wall its drapery gave way, and sliding two yards farther down a fleecy incline he plumped gently into water the same temperature as his body.

He looked about him. The runway or rollway on which he had arrived had folded gently back into place. He had been projected into another chamber and was sitting in a sunken bath with his head just above the level of the floor. All about him, lining the walls of the room and the sides and bottom of the bath itself, was a blue aquarium, and gazing through the crystal surface on which he sat, he could see fish swimming among amber lights and even gliding without curiosity past his outstretched toes, which were separated from them only by the thickness of the crystal. From overhead, sunlight came down through sea-green glass.

"I suppose, sir, that you'd like hot rosewater and soapsuds this morning, sir--and perhaps cold salt water to finish."

The negro was standing beside him.

"Yes," agreed John, smiling inanely, "as you please." Any idea of ordering this bath according to his own meagre standards of living would have been priggish and not a little wicked.

The negro pressed a button and a warm rain began to fall, apparently from overhead, but really, so John discovered after a moment, from a fountain arrangement near by. The water turned to a pale rose colour and jets of liquid soap spurted into it from four miniature walrus heads at the corners of the bath. In a moment a dozen little paddle-wheels, fixed to the sides, had churned the mixture into a radiant rainbow of pink foam which enveloped him softly with its delicious lightness, and burst in shining, rosy bubbles here and there about him.

"Shall I turn on the moving-picture machine, sir?" suggested the negro deferentially. "There's a good one-reel comedy in this machine to-day, or I can put in a serious piece in a moment, if you prefer it."

"No, thanks," answered John, politely but firmly. He was enjoying his bath too much to desire any distraction. But distraction came. In a moment he was listening intently to the sound of flutes from just outside, flutes dripping a melody that was like a waterfall, cool and green as the room itself, accompanying a frothy piccolo, in play more fragile than the lace of suds that covered and charmed him.

After a cold salt-water bracer and a cold fresh finish, he stepped out and into a fleecy robe, and upon a couch covered with the same material he was rubbed with oil, alcohol, and spice. Later he sat in a voluptuous while he was shaved and his hair was trimmed.

"Mr. Percy is waiting in your sitting-room," said the negro, when these operations were finished. "My name is Gygsum, Mr. Unger, sir. I am to see to Mr. Unger every morning."

John walked out into the brisk sunshine of his living-room, where he found breakfast waiting for him and Percy, gorgeous in white kid knickerbockers, smoking in an easy chair.

4

This is a story of the Washington family as Percy sketched it for John during breakfast.

The father of the present Mr. Washington had been a Virginian, a direct descendant of George Washington, and Lord Baltimore. At the close of the Civil War he was a twenty-five-year-old Colonel with a played-out plantation and about a thousand dollars in gold.

Fitz-Norman Culpepper Washington, for that was the young Colonel's name, decided to present the Virginia estate to his younger brother and go West. He selected two dozen of the most faithful blacks, who, of course, worshipped him, and bought twenty-five tickets to the West, where he intended to take out land in their names and start a sheep and cattle ranch.

When he had been in Montana for less than a month and things were going very poorly indeed, he stumbled on his great discovery. He had lost his way when riding the room and the sides and bottom of the bath itself was a blue aquarium, and gazing through the crystal surface on which he sat, he could see fish swimming among amber lights and even gliding without curiosity past his outstretched toes, which were separated from them only by the thickness of the crystal. From overhead, sunlight came down through sea-green glass.

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When he had been in Montana for less than a month and things were going very poorly indeed, he stumbled on his great discovery. He had lost his way when riding in the hills, and after a day without food he began to grow hungry. As he was without his rifle, he was forced to pursue a squirrel, and, in the course of the pursuit, he noticed that

it was carrying something shiny in its mouth. Just before it vanished into its hole--for Providence did not intend that this squirrel should alleviate his hunger--it dropped its burden. Sitting down to consider the situation Fitz-Norman's eye was caught by a gleam in the grass beside him. In ten seconds he had completely lost his appetite and gained one hundred thousand dollars. The squirrel, which had refused with annoying persistence to become food, had made him a present of a large and perfect diamond.

Late that night he found his way to camp and twelve hours later all the males among his darkies were back by the squirrel hole digging furiously at the side of the mountain. He told them he had discovered a rhinestone mine, and, as only one or two of them had ever seen even a small diamond before, they believed him, without question. When the magnitude of his discovery became apparent to him, he found himself in a quandary. The mountain was a diamond--it was literally nothing else but solid diamond. He filled four saddle bags full of glittering samples and started on horseback for St. Paul. There he managed to dispose of half a dozen small stones--when he tried a larger one a storekeeper fainted and Fitz-Norman was arrested as a public disturber. He escaped from jail and caught the train for New York, where he sold a few medium-sized diamonds and received in exchange about two hundred thousand dollars in gold. But he did not dare to produce any exceptional gems--in fact, he left New York just in time. Tremendous excitement had been created in jewellery circles, not so much by the size of his diamonds as by their appearance in the city from mysterious sources. Wild rumours became current that a diamond mine had been discovered in the Catskills, on the Jersey coast, on Long Island, beneath Washington Square. Excursion trains, packed with men carrying picks and shovels, began to leave New York hourly, bound for various neighbouring El Dorados. But by that time young Fitz-Norman was on his way back to Montana.

By the end of a fortnight he had estimated that the diamond in the mountain was approximately equal in quantity to all the rest of the diamonds known to exist in the world. There was no valuing it by any regular computation, however, for it was one solid diamond--and if it were offered for sale not only would the bottom fall out of the market, but also, if the value should vary with its size in the usual arithmetical progression, there would not be enough gold in the world to buy a tenth part of it. And what could any one do with a diamond that size?

It was an amazing predicament. He was, in one sense, the richest man that ever lived--and yet was he worth anything at all? If his secret should transpire there was no telling to what measures the Government might resort in order to prevent a panic, in gold as well as in jewels. They might take over the claim immediately and institute a monopoly.

There was no alternative--he must market his mountain in secret. He sent South for his younger brother and put him in charge of his coloured following, darkies who had never realised that slavery was abolished. To make sure of this, he read them a proclamation that he had composed, which announced that General Forrest had reorganised the shattered Southern armies and defeated the North in one pitched battle. The negroes believed him implicitly. They passed a vote declaring it a good thing and held revival services immediately.

Fitz-Norman himself set out for foreign parts with one hundred thousand dollars and two trunks filled with rough diamonds of all sizes. He sailed for Russia in a Chinese junk, and six months after his departure from Montana he was in St. Petersburg. He took obscure lodgings and called immediately upon the court jeweller, announcing that he had a diamond for the Czar. He remained in St. Petersburg for two weeks, in constant danger of being murdered, living from lodging to lodging, and afraid to visit his trunks more than three or four times during the whole fortnight.

On his promise to return in a year with larger and finer stones, he was allowed to leave for India. Before he left, however, the Court Treasurers had deposited to his credit, in American banks, the sum of fifteen million dollars--under four different aliases.

He returned to America in 1868, having been gone a little over two years. He had visited the capitals of twenty-two countries and talked with five emperors, eleven kings, three princes, a shah, a khan, and a sultan. At that time Fitz-Norman estimated his own wealth at one billion dollars. One fact worked consistently against the disclosure of his secret. No one of his larger diamonds remained in the public eye for a week before being invested with a history of enough fatalities, amours, revolutions, and wars to have occupied it from the days of the first Babylonian Empire.

From 1870 until his death in 1900, the history of Fitz-Norman Washington was a long epic in gold. There were side issues, of course--he evaded the surveys, he married a Virginia lady, by whom he had a single son, and he was compelled, due to a series of unfortunate complications, to murder his brother, whose unfortunate habit of drinking himself into an indiscreet stupor had several times endangered their safety. But very other murders stained these happy years of progress and expansion.

Just before he died he changed his policy, and with all but a few million dollars of his outside wealth bought up rare minerals in bulk, which he deposited in the safety vaults of banks all over the world, marked as bric-a-brac. His son, Braddock Tarleton Washington, followed this policy on an even more tensive scale. The minerals were converted

into the rarest of all elements--radium--so that the equivalent of a billion dollars in gold could be placed in a receptacle no bigger than a cigar box.

When Fitz-Norman had been dead three years his son, Braddock, decided that the business had gone far enough. The amount of wealth that he and his father had taken out of the mountain was beyond all exact computation. He kept a note-book in cipher in which he set down the approximate quantity of radium in each of the thousand banks he patronised, and recorded the alias under which it was held. Then he did a very simple thing--he sealed up the mine.

He sealed up the mine. What had been taken out of it would support all the Washingtons yet to be born in unparalleled luxury for generations. His one care must be the protection of his secret, lest in the possible panic attendant on its discovery he should be reduced with all the property-holders in the world to utter poverty.

This was the family among whom John T. Unger was staying. This was the story he heard in his silver-walled living-room the morning after his arrival.

5

After breakfast, John found his way out the great marble entrance, and looked curiously at the scene before him. The whole valley, from the diamond mountain to the steep granite cliff five miles away, still gave off a breath of golden haze which hovered idly above the fine sweep of lawns and lakes and gardens. Here and there clusters of elms made delicate groves of shade, contrasting strangely with the tough masses of pine forest that held the hills in a grip of dark-blue green. Even as John looked he saw three fawns in single file patter out from one clump about a half-mile away and disappear with awkward gaiety into the black-ribbed half-light of another. John would not have been surprised to see a goat-foot piping his way among the trees or to catch a glimpse of pink nymph-skin and flying yellow hair between the greenest of the green leaves.

In some such cool hope he descended the marble steps, disturbing faintly the sleep of two silky Russian wolfhounds at the bottom, and set off along a walk of white and blue brick that seemed to lead in no particular direction.

He was enjoying himself as much as he was able. It is youth's felicity as well as its insufficiency that it can never live in the present, but must always be measuring up the day against its own radiantly imagined future--flowers and gold, girls and stars, they are only prefigurations and prophecies of that incomparable, unattainable young

dream.

John rounded a soft corner where the massed rosebushes filled the air with heavy scent, and struck off across a park toward a patch of moss under some trees. He had never lain upon moss, and he wanted to see whether it was really soft enough to justify the use of its name as an adjective. Then he saw a girl coming toward him over the grass. She was the most beautiful person he had ever seen.

She was dressed in a white little gown that came just below her knees, and a wreath of mignonettes clasped with blue slices of sapphire bound up her hair. Her pink bare feet scattered the dew before them as she came. She was younger than John--not more than sixteen.

"Hallo," she cried softly, "I'm Kismine."

She was much more than that to John already. He advanced toward her, scarcely moving as he drew near lest he should tread on her bare toes.

"You haven't met me," said her soft voice. Her blue eyes added, "Oh, but you've missed a great deal!"... "You met my sister, Jasmine, last night. I was sick with lettuce poisoning," went on her soft voice, and her eye continued, "and when I'm sick I'm sweet--and when I'm well."

"You have made an enormous impression on me," said John's eyes, "and I'm not so slow myself"--"How do you do?" said his voice. "I hope you're better this morning."--"You darling," added his eyes tremulously.

John observed that they had been walking along the path. On her suggestion they sat down together upon the moss, the softness of which he failed to determine.

He was critical about women. A single defect--a thick ankle, a hoarse voice, a glass eye--was enough to make him utterly indifferent. And here for the first time in his life he was beside a girl who seemed to him the incarnation of physical perfection.

"Are you from the East?" asked Kismine with charming interest.

"No," answered John simply. "I'm from Hades."

Either she had never heard of Hades, or she could think of no pleasant comment to make upon it, for she did not discuss it further.

"I'm going East to school this fall" she said. "D'you think I'll like it? I'm going to New York to Miss Bulge's. It's very strict, but you see over the weekends I'm going to live at home with the family in our New York house, because father heard that the girls had to go walking

two by two."

"Your father wants you to be proud," observed John.

"We are," she answered, her eyes shining with dignity. "None of us has ever been punished. Father said we never should be. Once when my sister Jasmine was a little girl she pushed him downstairs and he just got up and limped away.

"Mother was--well, a little startled," continued Kismine, "when she heard that you were from--from where you _are_ from, you know. She said that when she was a young girl--but then, you see, she's a Spaniard and old-fashioned."

"Do you spend much time out here?" asked John, to conceal the fact that he was somewhat hurt by this remark. It seemed an unkind allusion to his provincialism.

"Percy and Jasmine and I are here every summer, but next summer Jasmine is going to Newport. She's coming out in London a year from this fall. She'll be presented at court."

"Do you know," began John hesitantly, "you're much more sophisticated than I thought you were when I first saw you?"

"Oh, no, I'm not," she exclaimed hurriedly. "Oh, I wouldn't think of being. I think that sophisticated young people are _terribly_ common, don't you? I'm not all, really. If you say I am, I'm going to cry."

She was so distressed that her lip was trembling. John was impelled to protest:

"I didn't mean that; I only said it to tease you."

"Because I wouldn't mind if I _were_," she persisted, "but I'm not. I'm very innocent and girlish. I never smoke, or drink, or read anything except poetry. I know scarcely any mathematics or chemistry. I dress _very_ simply--in fact, I scarcely dress at all. I think sophisticated is the last thing you can say about me. I believe that girls ought to enjoy their youths in a wholesome way."

"I do, too," said John, heartily,

Kismine was cheerful again. She smiled at him, and a still-born tear dripped from the corner of one blue eye.

"I like you," she whispered intimately. "Are you going to spend all your time with Percy while you're here, or will you be nice to me?"

Just think--I'm absolutely fresh ground. I've never had a boy in love with me in all my life. I've never been allowed even to _see_ boys alone--except Percy. I came all the way out here into this grove hoping to run into you, where the family wouldn't be around."

Deeply flattered, John bowed from the hips as he had been taught at dancing school in Hades.

"We'd better go now," said Kismine sweetly. "I have to be with mother at eleven. You haven't asked me to kiss you once. I thought boys always did that nowadays"

John drew himself up proudly.

"Some of them do," he answered, "but not me. Girls don't do that sort of thing--in Hades."

Side by side they walked back toward the house.

6

John stood facing Mr. Braddock Washington in the full sunlight. The elder man was about forty, with a proud, vacuous face, intelligent eyes, and a robust figure. In the mornings he smelt of horses--the best horses. He carried a plain walking-stick of gray birch with a single large opal for a grip. He and Percy were showing John around.

"The slaves' quarters are there." His walking-stick indicated a cloister of marble on their left that ran in graceful Gothic along the side of the mountain. "In my youth I was distracted for a while from the business of life by a period of absurd idealism. During that time they lived in luxury. For instance, I equipped every one of their rooms with a tile bath."

"I suppose," ventured John, with an ingratiating laugh, "that they used the bathtubs to keep coal in. Mr. Schnlitzer-Murphy told me that once he---"

"The opinions of Mr. Schnlitzer-Murphy are of little importance, I should imagine," interrupted Braddock Washington coldly. "My slaves did not keep coal in their bathtubs. They had orders to bathe every day, and they did. If they hadn't I might have ordered a sulphuric acid shampoo. I discontinued the baths for quite another reason. Several of them caught cold and died. Water is not good for certain races--except as a beverage."

John laughed, and then decided to nod his head in sober agreement. Braddock Washington made him uncomfortable.

"All these negroes are descendants of the ones my father brought North with him. There are about two hundred and fifty now. You notice that they've lived so long apart from the world that their original dialect has become an almost indistinguishable patois. We bring a few of them up to speak English--my secretary and two or three of the house servants.

"This is the golf course," he continued, as they strolled along the velvet winter grass. "It's all a green, you see--no fairway, no rough, no hazards."

He smiled pleasantly at John.

"Many men in the cage, father?" asked Percy suddenly.

Braddock Washington stumbled, and let forth an involuntary curse.

"One less than there should be," he ejaculated darkly--and then added after a moment, "We've had difficulties."

"Mother was telling me," exclaimed Percy, "that Italian teacher---"

"A ghastly error," said Braddock Washington angrily. "But of course there's a good chance that we may have got him. Perhaps he fell somewhere in the woods or stumbled over a cliff. And then there's always the probability that if he did get away his story wouldn't be believed. Nevertheless, I've had two dozen men looking for him in different towns around here."

"And no luck?"

"Some. Fourteen of them reported to my agent they'd each killed a man answering to that description, but of course it was probably only the reward they were after---"

He broke off. They had come to a large cavity in the earth about the circumference of a merry-go-round, and covered by a strong iron grating. Braddock Washington beckoned to John, and pointed his cane down through the grating. John stepped to the edge and gazed. Immediately his ears were assailed by a wild clamor from below.

"Come on down to Hell!"

"Hallo, kiddo, how's the air up there?"

"Hey! Throw us a rope!"

"Got an old doughnut, Buddy, or a couple of second-hand sandwiches?"

"Say, fella, if you'll push down that guy you're with, we'll show you a quick disappearance scene."

"Paste him one for me, will you?"

It was too dark to see clearly into the pit below, but John could tell from the coarse optimism and rugged vitality of the remarks and voices that they proceeded from middle-class Americans of the more spirited type. Then Mr. Washington put out his cane and touched a button in the grass, and the scene below sprang into light.

"These are some adventurous mariners who had the misfortune to discover El Dorado," he remarked.

Below them there had appeared a large hollow in the earth shaped like the interior of a bowl. The sides were steep and apparently of polished glass, and on its slightly concave surface stood about two dozen men clad in the half costume, half uniform, of aviators. Their upturned faces, lit with wrath, with malice, with despair, with cynical humour, were covered by long growths of beard, but with the exception of a few who had pined perceptibly away, they seemed to be a well-fed, healthy lot.

Braddock Washington drew a garden chair to the edge of the pit and sat down.

"Well, how are you, boys?" he inquired genially.

A chorus of execration, in which all joined except a few too dispirited to cry out, rose up into the sunny air, but Braddock Washington heard it with unruffled composure. When its last echo had died away he spoke again.

"Have you thought up a way out of your difficulty?"

From here and there among them a remark floated up.

"We decided to stay here for love!"

"Bring us up there and we'll find us a way!"

Braddock Washington waited until they were again quiet. Then he said:

"I've told you the situation. I don't want you here, I wish to heaven I'd never seen you. Your own curiosity got you here, and any time that you can think of a way out which protects me and my interests I'll be glad to consider it. But so long as you confine your efforts to digging tunnels--yes, I know about the new one you've started--you

won't get very far. This isn't as hard on you as you make it out, with all your howling for the loved ones at home. If you were the type who worried much about the loved ones at home, you'd never have taken up aviation."

A tall man moved apart from the others, and held up his hand to call his captor's attention to what he was about to say.

"Let me ask you a few questions!" he cried. "You pretend to be a fair-minded man."

"How absurd. How could a man of _my_ position be fair-minded toward you? You might as well speak of a Spaniard being fair-minded toward a piece of steak."

At this harsh observation the faces of the two dozen fell, but the tall man continued:

"All right!" he cried. "We've argued this out before. You're not a humanitarian and you're not fair-minded, but you're human--at least you say you are--and you ought to be able to put yourself in our place for long enough to think how--how--how--"

"How what?" demanded Washington, coldly.

"--how unnecessary--"

"Not to me."

"Well--how cruel--"

"We've covered that. Cruelty doesn't exist where self-preservation is involved. You've been soldiers; you know that. Try another."

"Well, then, how stupid."

"There," admitted Washington, "I grant you that. But try to think of an alternative. I've offered to have all or any of you painlessly executed if you wish. I've offered to have your wives, sweethearts, children, and mothers kidnapped and brought out here. I'll enlarge your place down there and feed and clothe you the rest of your lives. If there was some method of producing permanent amnesia I'd have all of you operated on and released immediately, somewhere outside of my preserves. But that's as far as my ideas go."

"How about trusting us not to peach on you?" cried some one.

"You don't proffer that suggestion seriously," said Washington, with an expression of scorn. "I did take out one man to teach my daughter

Italian. Last week he got away."

A wild yell of jubilation went up suddenly from two dozen throats and a pandemonium of joy ensued. The prisoners clog-danced and cheered and yodled and wrestled with one another in a sudden uprush of animal spirits. They even ran up the glass sides of the bowl as far as they could, and slid back to the bottom upon the natural cushions of their bodies. The tall man started a song in which they all joined--

"_Oh, we'll hang the kaiser
On a sour apple-tree_--"

Braddock Washington sat in inscrutable silence until the song was over.

"You see," he remarked, when he could gain a modicum of attention. "I bear you no ill-will. I like to see you enjoying yourselves. That's why I didn't tell you the whole story at once. The man--what was his name? Critchtichiello?--was shot by some of my agents in fourteen different places."

Not guessing that the places referred to were cities, the tumult of rejoicing subsided immediately.

"Nevertheless," cried Washington with a touch of anger, "he tried to run away. Do you expect me to take chances with any of you after an experience like that?"

Again a series of ejaculations went up.

"Sure!"

"Would your daughter like to learn Chinese?"

"Hey, I can speak Italian! My mother was a wop."

"Maybe she'd like t'learn a speak N'Yawk!"

"If she's the little one with the big blue eyes I can teach her a lot of things better than Italian."

"I know some Irish songs--and I could hammer brass once't."

Mr. Washington reached forward suddenly with his cane and pushed the button in the grass so that the picture below went out instantly, and there remained only that great dark mouth covered dismally with the black teeth of the grating.

"Hey!" called a single voice from below, "you ain't goin' away without

givin' us your blessing?"

But Mr. Washington, followed by the two boys, was already strolling on toward the ninth hole of the golf course, as though the pit and its contents were no more than a hazard over which his facile iron had triumphed with ease.

7

July under the lee of the diamond mountain was a month of blanket nights and of warm, glowing days. John and Kismine were in love. He did not know that the little gold football (inscribed with the legend _Pro deo et patria et St. Mida_) which he had given her rested on a platinum chain next to her bosom. But it did. And she for her part was not aware that a large sapphire which had dropped one day from her simple coiffure was stowed away tenderly in John's jewel box.

Late one afternoon when the ruby and ermine music room was quiet, they spent an hour there together. He held her hand and she gave him such a look that he whispered her name aloud. She bent toward him--then hesitated.

"Did you say 'Kismine'?" she asked softly, "or--"

She had wanted to be sure. She thought she might have misunderstood.

Neither of them had ever kissed before, but in the course of an hour it seemed to make little difference.

The afternoon drifted away. That night, when a last breath of music drifted down from the highest tower, they each lay awake, happily dreaming over the separate minutes of the day. They had decided to be married as soon as possible.

8

Every day Mr. Washington and the two young men went hunting or fishing in the deep forests or played golf around the somnolent course--games which John diplomatically allowed his host to win--or swam in the mountain coolness of the lake. John found Mr. Washington a somewhat exacting personality--utterly uninterested in any ideas or opinions except his own. Mrs. Washington was aloof and reserved at all times. She was apparently indifferent to her two daughters, and entirely absorbed in her son Percy, with whom she held interminable conversations in rapid Spanish at dinner.

Jasmine, the elder daughter, resembled Kismine in appearance--except

that she was somewhat bow-legged, and terminated in large hands and feet--but was utterly unlike her in temperament. Her favourite books had to do with poor girls who kept house for widowed fathers. John learned from Kismine that Jasmine had never recovered from the shock and disappointment caused her by the termination of the World War, just as she was about to start for Europe as a canteen expert. She had even pined away for a time, and Braddock Washington had taken steps to promote a new war in the Balkans--but she had seen a photograph of some wounded Serbian soldiers and lost interest in the whole proceedings. But Percy and Kismine seemed to have inherited the arrogant attitude in all its harsh magnificence from their father. A chaste and consistent selfishness ran like a pattern through their every idea.

John was enchanted by the wonders of the chateau and the valley. Braddock Washington, so Percy told him, had caused to be kidnapped a landscape gardener, an architect, a designer of state settings, and a French decadent poet left over from the last century. He had put his entire force of negroes at their disposal, guaranteed to supply them with any materials that the world could offer, and left them to work out some ideas of their own. But one by one they had shown their uselessness. The decadent poet had at once begun bewailing his separation, from the boulevards in spring--he made some vague remarks about spices, apes, and ivories, but said nothing that was of any practical value. The stage designer on his part wanted to make the whole valley a series of tricks and sensational effects--a state of things that the Washingtons would soon have grown tired of. And as for the architect and the landscape gardener, they thought only in terms of convention. They must make this like this and that like that.

But they had, at least, solved the problem of what was to be done with them--they all went mad early one morning after spending the night in a single room trying to agree upon the location of a fountain, and were now confined comfortably in an insane asylum at Westport, Connecticut.

"But," inquired John curiously, "who did plan all your wonderful reception rooms and halls, and approaches and bathrooms---?"

"Well," answered Percy, "I blush to tell you, but it was a moving-picture fella. He was the only man we found who was used to playing with an unlimited amount of money, though he did tuck his napkin in his collar and couldn't read or write."

As August drew to a close John began to regret that he must soon go back to school. He and Kismine had decided to elope the following June.

"It would be nicer to be married here," Kismine confessed, "but of

course I could never get father's permission to marry you at all. Next to that I'd rather elope. It's terrible for wealthy people to be married in America at present--they always have to send out bulletins to the press saying that they're going to be married in remnants, when what they mean is just a peck of old second-hand pearls and some used lace worn once by the Empress Eugenie."

"I know," agreed John fervently. "When I was visiting the Schnitzer-Murphys, the eldest daughter, Gwendolyn, married a man whose father owns half of West Virginia. She wrote home saying what a tough struggle she was carrying on on his salary as a bank clerk--and then she ended up by saying that 'Thank God, I have four good maids anyhow, and that helps a little.'"

"It's absurd," commented Kismine--"Think of the millions and millions of people in the world, labourers and all, who get along with only two maids."

One afternoon late in August a chance remark of Kismine's changed the face of the entire situation, and threw John into a state of terror.

They were in their favourite grove, and between kisses John was indulging in some romantic forebodings which he fancied added poignancy to their relations.

"Sometimes I think we'll never marry," he said sadly. "You're too wealthy, too magnificent. No one as rich as you are can be like other girls. I should marry the daughter of some well-to-do wholesale hardware man from Omaha or Sioux City, and be content with her half-million."

"I knew the daughter of a wholesale hardware man once," remarked Kismine. "I don't think you'd have been contented with her. She was a friend of my sister's. She visited here."

"Oh, then you've had other guests?" exclaimed John in surprise.

Kismine seemed to regret her words.

"Oh, yes," she said hurriedly, "we've had a few."

"But aren't you--wasn't your father afraid they'd talk outside?"

"Oh, to some extent, to some extent," she answered, "Let's talk about something pleasanter."

But John's curiosity was aroused.

"Something pleasanter!" he demanded. "What's unpleasant about that?"

Weren't they nice girls?"

To his great surprise Kismine began to weep.

"Yes--th--that's the--the whole t-trouble. I grew qu-quite attached to some of them. So did Jasmine, but she kept inv-viting them anyway. I couldn't under_stand_it."

A dark suspicion was born in John's heart.

"Do you mean that they _told_ and your father had them--removed?"

"Worse than that," she muttered brokenly. "Father took no chances--and Jasmine kept writing them to come, and they had _such_ a good time!"

She was overcome by a paroxysm of grief.

Stunned with the horror of this revelation, John sat there open-mouthed, feeling the nerves of his body twitter like so many sparrows perched upon his spinal column.

"Now, I've told you, and I shouldn't have," she said, calming suddenly and drying her dark blue eyes.

"Do you mean to say that your father had them _murdered_ before they left?"

She nodded.

"In August usually--or early in September. It's only natural for us to get all the pleasure out of them that we can first."

"How abominable! How--why, I must be going crazy! Did you really admit that--"

"I did," interrupted Kismine, shrugging her shoulders. "We can't very well imprison them like those aviators, where they'd be a continual reproach to us every day. And it's always been made easier for Jasmine and me, because father had it done sooner than we expected. In that way we avoided any farewell scene--"

"So you murdered them! Uh!" cried John.

"It was done very nicely. They were drugged while they were asleep--and their families were always told that they died of scarlet fever in Butte."

"But--I fail to understand why you kept on inviting them!"

"I didn't," burst out Kismine. "I never invited one. Jasmine did. And they always had a very good time. She'd give them the nicest presents toward the last. I shall probably have visitors too--I'll harden up to it. We can't let such an inevitable thing as death stand in the way of enjoying life while we have it. Think of how lonesome it'd be out here if we never had _any_ one. Why, father and mother have sacrificed some of their best friends just as we have."

"And so," cried John accusingly, "and so you were letting me make love to you and pretending to return it, and talking about marriage, all the time knowing perfectly well that I'd never get out of here alive---"

"No," she protested passionately. "Not any more. I did at first. You were here. I couldn't help that, and I thought your last days might as well be pleasant for both of us. But then I fell in love with you, and--and I'm honestly sorry you're going to--going to be put away--though I'd rather you'd be put away than ever kiss another girl."

"Oh, you would, would you?" cried John ferociously.

"Much rather. Besides, I've always heard that a girl can have more fun with a man whom she knows she can never marry. Oh, why did I tell you? I've probably spoiled your whole good time now, and we were really enjoying things when you didn't know it. I knew it would make things sort of depressing for you."

"Oh, you did, did you?" John's voice trembled with anger. "I've heard about enough of this. If you haven't any more pride and decency than to have an affair with a fellow that you know isn't much better than a corpse, I don't want to have any more to do with you!"

"You're not a corpse!" she protested in horror. "You're not a corpse! I won't have you saying that I kissed a corpse!"

"I said nothing of the sort!"

"You did! You said I kissed a corpse!"

"I didn't!"

Their voices had risen, but upon a sudden interruption they both subsided into immediate silence. Footsteps were coming along the path in their direction, and a moment later the rose bushes were parted displaying Braddock Washington, whose intelligent eyes set in his good-looking vacuous face were peering in at them.

"Who kissed a corpse?" he demanded in obvious disapproval.

"Nobody," answered Kismine quickly. "We were just joking."

"What are you two doing here, anyhow?" he demanded gruffly. "Kismine, you ought to be--to be reading or playing golf with your sister. Go read! Go play golf! Don't let me find you here when I come back!"

Then he bowed at John and went up the path.

"See?" said Kismine crossly, when he was out of hearing. "You've spoiled it all. We can never meet any more. He won't let me meet you. He'd have you poisoned if he thought we were in love."

"We're not, any more!" cried John fiercely, "so he can set his mind at rest upon that. Moreover, don't fool yourself that I'm going to stay around here. Inside of six hours I'll be over those mountains, if I have to gnaw a passage through them, and on my way East." They had both got to their feet, and at this remark Kismine came close and put her arm through his.

"I'm going, too."

"You must be crazy--"

"Of course I'm going," she interrupted impatiently.

"You most certainly are not. You--"

"Very well," she said quietly, "we'll catch up with father and talk it over with him."

Defeated, John mustered a sickly smile.

"Very well, dearest," he agreed, with pale and unconvincing affection, "we'll go together."

His love for her returned and settled placidly on his heart. She was his--she would go with him to share his dangers. He put his arms about her and kissed her fervently. After all she loved him; she had saved him, in fact.

Discussing the matter, they walked slowly back toward the chateau. They decided that since Braddock Washington had seen them together they had best depart the next night. Nevertheless, John's lips were unusually dry at dinner, and he nervously emptied a great spoonful of peacock soup into his left lung. He had to be carried into the turquoise and sable card-room and pounded on the back by one of the

under-butlers, which Percy considered a great joke.

9

Long after midnight John's body gave a nervous jerk, he sat suddenly upright, staring into the veils of somnolence that draped the room. Through the squares of blue darkness that were his open windows, he had heard a faint far-away sound that died upon a bed of wind before identifying itself on his memory, clouded with uneasy dreams. But the sharp noise that had succeeded it was nearer, was just outside the room--the click of a turned knob, a footstep, a whisper, he could not tell; a hard lump gathered in the pit of his stomach, and his whole body ached in the moment that he strained agonisingly to hear. Then one of the veils seemed to dissolve, and he saw a vague figure standing by the door, a figure only faintly limned and blocked in upon the darkness, mingled so with the folds of the drapery as to seem distorted, like a reflection seen in a dirty pane of glass.

With a sudden movement of fright or resolution John pressed the button by his bedside, and the next moment he was sitting in the green sunken bath of the adjoining room, waked into alertness by the shock of the cold water which half filled it.

He sprang out, and, his wet pyjamas scattering a heavy trickle of water behind him, ran for the aquamarine door which he knew led out on to the ivory landing of the second floor. The door opened noiselessly. A single crimson lamp burning in a great dome above lit the magnificent sweep of the carved stairways with a poignant beauty. For a moment John hesitated, appalled by the silent splendour massed about him, seeming to envelop in its gigantic folds and contours the solitary drenched little figure shivering upon the ivory landing. Then simultaneously two things happened. The door of his own sitting-room swung open, precipitating three naked negroes into the hall--and, as John swayed in wild terror toward the stairway, another door slid back in the wall on the other side of the corridor, and John saw Braddock Washington standing in the lighted lift, wearing a fur coat and a pair of riding boots which reached to his knees and displayed, above, the glow of his rose-colored pyjamas.

On the instant the three negroes--John had never seen any of them before, and it flashed through his mind that they must be the professional executioners paused in their movement toward John, and turned expectantly to the man in the lift, who burst out with an imperious command:

"Get in here! All three of you! Quick as hell!"

Then, within the instant, the three negroes darted into the cage, the

oblong of light was blotted out as the lift door slid shut, and John was again alone in the hall. He slumped weakly down against an ivory stair.

It was apparent that something portentous had occurred, something which, for the moment at least, had postponed his own petty disaster. What was it? Had the negroes risen in revolt? Had the aviators forced aside the iron bars of the grating? Or had the men of Fish stumbled blindly through the hills and gazed with bleak, joyless eyes upon the gaudy valley? John did not know. He heard a faint whir of air as the lift whizzed up again, and then, a moment later, as it descended. It was probable that Percy was hurrying to his father's assistance, and it occurred to John that this was his opportunity to join Kismine and plan an immediate escape. He waited until the lift had been silent for several minutes; shivering a little with the night cool that whipped in through his wet pyjamas, he returned to his room and dressed himself quickly. Then he mounted a long flight of stairs and turned down the corridor carpeted with Russian sable which led to Kismine's suite.

The door of her sitting-room was open and the lamps were lighted. Kismine, in an angora kimono, stood near the window Of the room in a listening attitude, and as John entered noiselessly she turned toward him.

"Oh, it's you!" she whispered, crossing the room to him. "Did you hear them?"

I heard your father's slaves in my---"

"No," she interrupted excitedly. "Aeroplanes!"

"Aeroplanes? Perhaps that was the sound that woke me."

"There're at least a dozen. I saw one a few moments ago dead against the moon. The guard back by the cliff fired his rifle and that's what roused father. We're going to open on them right away."

"Are they here on purpose?"

"Yes--it's that Italian who got away---"

Simultaneously with her last word, a succession of sharp cracks tumbled in through the open window. Kismine uttered a little cry, took a penny with fumbling fingers from a box on her dresser, and ran to one of the electric lights. In an instant the entire chateau was in darkness--she had blown out the fuse.

"Come on!" she cried to him. "We'll go up to the roof garden, and

watch it from there!"

Drawing a cape about her, she took his hand, and they found their way out the door. It was only a step to the tower lift, and as she pressed the button that shot them upward he put his arms around her in the darkness and kissed her mouth. Romance had come to John Unger at last. A minute later they had stepped out upon the star-white platform. Above, under the misty moon, sliding in and out of the patches of cloud that eddied below it, floated a dozen dark-winged bodies in a constant circling course. From here and there in the valley flashes of fire leaped toward them, followed by sharp detonations. Kismine clapped her hands with pleasure, which, a moment later, turned to dismay as the aeroplanes, at some prearranged signal, began to release their bombs and the whole of the valley became a panorama of deep reverberate sound and lurid light.

Before long the aim of the attackers became concentrated upon the points where the anti-aircraft guns were situated, and one of them was almost immediately reduced to a giant cinder to lie smouldering in a park of rose bushes.

"Kismine," begged John, "you'll be glad when I tell you that this attack came on the eve of my murder. If I hadn't heard that guard shoot off his gun back by the pass I should now be stone dead---"

"I can't hear you!" cried Kismine, intent on the scene before her. "You'll have to talk louder!"

"I simply said," shouted John, "that we'd better get out before they begin to shell the chateau!"

Suddenly the whole portico of the negro quarters cracked asunder, a geyser of flame shot up from under the colonnades, and great fragments of jagged marble were hurled as far as the borders of the lake.

"There go fifty thousand dollars' worth of slaves," cried Kismine, "at pre-war prices. So few Americans have any respect for property."

John renewed his efforts to compel her to leave. The aim of the aeroplanes was becoming more precise minute by minute, and only two of the anti-aircraft guns were still retaliating. It was obvious that the garrison, encircled with fire, could not hold out much longer.

"Come on!" cried John, pulling Kismine's arm, "we've got to go. Do you realise that those aviators will kill you without question if they find you?"

She consented reluctantly.

"We'll have to wake Jasmine!" she said, as they hurried toward the lift. Then she added in a sort of childish delight: "We'll be poor, won't we? Like people in books. And I'll be an orphan and utterly free. Free and poor! What fun!" She stopped and raised her lips to him in a delighted kiss.

"It's impossible to be both together," said John grimly. "People have found that out. And I should choose to be free as preferable of the two. As an extra caution you'd better dump the contents of your jewel box into your pockets."

Ten minutes later the two girls met John in the dark corridor and they descended to the main floor of the chateau. Passing for the last time through the magnificence of the splendid halls, they stood for a moment out on the terrace, watching the burning negro quarters and the flaming embers of two planes which had fallen on the other side of the lake. A solitary gun was still keeping up a sturdy popping, and the attackers seemed timorous about descending lower, but sent their thunderous fireworks in a circle around it, until any chance shot might annihilate its Ethiopian crew.

John and the two sisters passed down the marble steps, turned sharply to the left, and began to ascend a narrow path that wound like a garter about the diamond mountain. Kismine knew a heavily wooded spot half-way up where they could lie concealed and yet be able to observe the wild night in the valley--finally to make an escape, when it should be necessary, along a secret path laid in a rocky gully.

10

It was three o'clock when they attained their destination. The obliging and phlegmatic Jasmine fell off to sleep immediately, leaning against the trunk of a large tree, while John and Kismine sat, his arm around her, and watched the desperate ebb and flow of the dying battle among the ruins of a vista that had been a garden spot that morning. Shortly after four o'clock the last remaining gun gave out a clanging sound, and went out of action in a swift tongue of red smoke. Though the moon was down, they saw that the flying bodies were circling closer to the earth. When the planes had made certain that the beleaguered possessed no further resources they would land and the dark and glittering reign of the Washingtons would be over.

With the cessation of the firing the valley grew quiet. The embers of the two aeroplanes glowed like the eyes of some monster crouching in the grass. The chateau stood dark and silent, beautiful without light as it had been beautiful in the sun, while the woody rattles of Nemesis filled the air above with a growing and receding complaint. Then John perceived that Kismine, like her sister, had fallen sound

asleep.

It was long after four when he became aware of footsteps along the path they had lately followed, and he waited in breathless silence until the persons to whom they belonged had passed the vantage-point he occupied. There was a faint stir in the air now that was not of human origin, and the dew was cold; he knew that the dawn would break soon. John waited until the steps had gone a safe distance up the mountain and were inaudible. Then he followed. About half-way to the steep summit the trees fell away and a hard saddle of rock spread itself over the diamond beneath. Just before he reached this point he slowed down his pace warned by an animal sense that there was life just ahead of him. Coming to a high boulder, he lifted his head gradually above its edge. His curiosity was rewarded; this is what he saw:

Braddock Washington was standing there motionless, silhouetted against the gray sky without sound or sign of life. As the dawn came up out of the east, lending a gold green colour to the earth, it brought the solitary figure into insignificant contrast with the new day,

While John watched, his host remained for a few moments absorbed in some inscrutable contemplation; then he signalled to the two negroes who crouched at his feet to lift the burden which lay between them. As they struggled upright, the first yellow beam of the sun struck through the innumerable prisms of an immense and exquisitely chiselled diamond--and a white radiance was kindled that glowed upon the air like a fragment of the morning star. The bearers staggered beneath its weight for a moment--then their rippling muscles caught and hardened under the wet shine of the skins and the three figures were again motionless in their defiant impotency before the heavens.

After a while the white man lifted his head and slowly raised his arms in a gesture of attention, as one who would call a great crowd to hear--but there was no crowd, only the vast silence of the mountain and the sky, broken by faint bird voices down among the trees. The figure on the saddle of rock began to speak ponderously and with an inextinguishable pride.

"You--out there---!" he cried in a trembling voice.

"You--there-----!" He paused, his arms still uplifted, his head held attentively as though he were expecting an answer. John strained his eyes to see whether there might be men coming down the mountain, but the mountain was bare of human life. There was only sky and a mocking flute of wind along the treetops. Could Washington be praying? For a moment John wondered. Then the illusion passed--there was something in the man's whole attitude antithetical to prayer.

"Oh, you above there!"

The voice was become strong and confident. This was no forlorn supplication. If anything, there was in it a quality of monstrous condescension.

"You there---" Words, too quickly uttered to be understood, flowing one into the other John listened breathlessly, catching a phrase here and there, while the voice broke off, resumed, broke off again--now strong and argumentative, now coloured with a slow, puzzled impatience, Then a conviction commenced to dawn on the single listener, and as realisation crept over him a spray of quick blood rushed through his arteries. Braddock Washington was offering a bribe to God!

That was it--there was no doubt. The diamond in the arms of his slaves was some advance sample, a promise of more to follow.

That, John perceived after a time, was the thread running through his sentences. Prometheus Enriched was calling to witness forgotten sacrifices, forgotten rituals, prayers obsolete before the birth of Christ. For a while his discourse took the form of reminding God of this gift or that which Divinity had deigned to accept from men--great churches if he would rescue cities from the plague, gifts of myrrh and gold, of human lives and beautiful women and captive armies, of children and queens, of beasts of the forest and field, sheep and goats, harvests and cities, whole conquered lands that had been offered up in lust or blood for His appeasal, buying a meed's worth of alleviation from the Divine wrath--and now he, Braddock Washington, Emperor of Diamonds, king and priest of the age of gold, arbiter of splendour and luxury, would offer up a treasure such as princes before him had never dreamed of, offer it up not in suppliance, but in pride.

He would give to God, he continued, getting down to specifications, the greatest diamond in the world. This diamond would be cut with many more thousand facets than there were leaves on a tree, and yet the whole diamond would be shaped with the perfection of a stone no bigger than a fly. Many men would work upon it for many years. It would be set in a great dome of beaten gold, wonderfully carved and equipped with gates of opal and crusted sapphire. In the middle would be hollowed out a chapel presided over by an altar of iridescent, decomposing, ever-changing radium which would burn out the eyes of any worshipper who lifted up his head from prayer--and on this altar there would be slain for the amusement of the Divine Benefactor any victim He should choose, even though it should be the greatest and most powerful man alive.

In return he asked only a simple thing, a thing that for God would be absurdly easy--only that matters should be as they were yesterday at

this hour and that they should so remain. So very simple! Let but the heavens open, swallowing these men and their aeroplanes--and then close again. Let him have his slaves once more, restored to life and well.

There was no one else with whom he had ever needed: to treat or bargain.

He doubted only whether he had made his bribe big enough. God had His price, of course. God was made in man's image, so it had been said: He must have His price. And the price would be rare--no cathedral whose building consumed many years, no pyramid constructed by ten thousand workmen, would be like this cathedral, this pyramid.

He paused here. That was his proposition. Everything would be up to specifications, and there was nothing vulgar in his assertion that it would be cheap at the price. He implied that Providence could take it or leave it.

As he approached the end his sentences became broken, became short and uncertain, and his body seemed tense, seemed strained to catch the slightest pressure or whisper of life in the spaces around him. His hair had turned gradually white as he talked, and now he lifted his head high to the heavens like a prophet of old--magnificently mad.

Then, as John stared in giddy fascination, it seemed to him that a curious phenomenon took place somewhere around him. It was as though the sky had darkened for an instant, as though there had been a sudden murmur in a gust of wind, a sound of far-away trumpets, a sighing like the rustle of a great silken robe--for a time the whole of nature round about partook of this darkness; the birds' song ceased; the trees were still, and far over the mountain there was a mutter of dull, menacing thunder.

That was all. The wind died along the tall grasses of the valley. The dawn and the day resumed their place in a time, and the risen sun sent hot waves of yellow mist that made its path bright before it. The leaves laughed in the sun, and their laughter shook until each bough was like a girl's school in fairyland. God had refused to accept the bribe.

For another moment John, watched the triumph of the day. Then, turning, he saw a flutter of brown down by the lake, then another flutter, then another, like the dance of golden angels alighting from the clouds. The aeroplanes had come to earth.

John slid off the boulder and ran down the side of the mountain to the clump of trees, where the two girls were awake and waiting for him. Kismine sprang to her feet, the jewels in her pockets jingling, a

question on her parted lips, but instinct told John that there was no time for words. They must get off the mountain without losing a moment. He seized a hand of each, and in silence they threaded the tree-trunks, washed with light now and with the rising mist. Behind them from the valley came no sound at all, except the complaint of the peacocks far away and the pleasant of morning.

When they had gone about half a mile, they avoided the park land and entered a narrow path that led over the next rise of ground. At the highest point of this they paused and turned around. Their eyes rested upon the mountainside they had just left--oppressed by some dark sense of tragic impendency.

Clear against the sky a broken, white-haired man was slowly descending the steep slope, followed by two gigantic and emotionless negroes, who carried a burden between them which still flashed and glittered in the sun. Half-way down two other figures joined them--John could see that they were Mrs. Washington and her son, upon whose arm she leaned. The aviators had clambered from their machines to the sweeping lawn in front of the chateau, and with rifles in hand were starting up the diamond mountain in skirmishing formation.

But the little group of five which had formed farther up and was engrossing all the watchers' attention had stopped upon a ledge of rock. The negroes stooped and pulled up what appeared to be a trap-door in the side of the mountain. Into this they all disappeared, the white-haired man first, then his wife and son, finally the two negroes, the glittering tips of whose jewelled head-dresses caught the sun for a moment before the trap-door descended and engulfed them all.

Kismine clutched John's arm.

"Oh," she cried wildly, "where are they going? What are they going to do?"

"It must be some underground way of escape--"

A little scream from the two girls interrupted his sentence.

"Don't you see?" sobbed Kismine hysterically. "The mountain is wired!"

Even as she spoke John put up his hands to shield his sight. Before their eyes the whole surface of the mountain had changed suddenly to a dazzling burning yellow, which showed up through the jacket of turf as light shows through a human hand. For a moment the intolerable glow continued, and then like an extinguished filament it disappeared, revealing a black waste from which blue smoke arose slowly, carrying off with it what remained of vegetation and of human flesh. Of the aviators there was left neither blood nor bone--they were consumed as

completely as the five souls who had gone inside.

Simultaneously, and with an immense concussion, the chateau literally threw itself into the air, bursting into flaming fragments as it rose, and then tumbling back upon itself in a smoking pile that lay projecting half into the water of the lake. There was no fire--what smoke there was drifted off mingling with the sunshine, and for a few minutes longer a powdery dust of marble drifted from the great featureless pile that had once been the house of jewels. There was no more sound and the three people were alone in the valley.

9

At sunset John and his two companions reached the huge cliff which had marked the boundaries of the Washington's dominion, and looking back found the valley tranquil and lovely in the dusk. They sat down to finish the food which Jasmine had brought with her in a basket,

"There!" she said, as she spread the table-cloth and put the sandwiches in a neat pile upon it. "Don't they look tempting? I always think that food tastes better outdoors."

"With that remark," remarked Kismine, "Jasmine enters the middle class."

"Now," said John eagerly, "turn out your pocket and let's see what jewels you brought along. If you made a good selection we three ought to live comfortably all the rest of our lives."

Obediently Kismine put her hand in her pocket and tossed two handfuls of glittering stones before him. "Not so bad," cried John enthusiastically. "They aren't very big, but-Hallo!" His expression changed as he held one of them up to the declining sun. "Why, these aren't diamonds! There's something the matter!

"By golly!" exclaimed Kismine, with a startled look. "What an idiot I am!"

"Why, these are rhinestones!" cried John.

"I know." She broke into a laugh. "I opened the wrong drawer. They belonged on the dress of a girl who visited Jasmine. I got her to give them to me in exchange for diamonds. I'd never seen anything but precious stones before."

"And this is what you brought?"

"I'm afraid so." She fingered the brilliants wistfully. "I think I

like these better. I'm a little tired of diamonds."

"Very well," said John gloomily. "We'll have to live in Hades. And you will grow old telling incredulous women that you got the wrong drawer. Unfortunately, your father's bank-books were consumed with him."

"Well, what's the matter with Hades?"

"If I come home with a wife at my age my father is just as liable as not to cut me off with a hot coal, as they say down there."

Jasmine spoke up.

"I love washing," she said quietly. "I have always washed my own handkerchiefs. I'll take in laundry and support you both."

"Do they have washwomen in Hades?" asked Kismine innocently.

"Of course," answered John. "It's just like anywhere else."

"I thought--perhaps it was too hot to wear any clothes."

John laughed.

"Just try it!" he suggested. "They'll run you out before you're half started."

"Will father be there?" she asked.

John turned to her in astonishment.

"Your father is dead," he replied sombrely. "Why should he go to Hades? You have it confused with another place that was abolished long ago."

After supper they folded up the table-cloth and spread their blankets for the night.

"What a dream it was," Kismine sighed, gazing up at the stars. "How strange it seems to be here with one dress and a penniless fiancée!"

"Under the stars," she repeated. "I never noticed the stars before. I always thought of them as great big diamonds that belonged to some one. Now they frighten me. They make me feel that it was all a dream, all my youth."

"It was a dream," said John quietly. "Everybody's youth is a dream, a form of chemical madness."

"How pleasant then to be insane!"

"So I'm told," said John gloomily. "I don't know any longer. At any rate, let us love for a while, for a year or so, you and me. That's a form of divine drunkenness that we can all try. There are only diamonds in the whole world, diamonds and perhaps the shabby gift of disillusion. Well, I have that last and I will make the usual nothing of it." He shivered. "Turn up your coat collar, little girl, the night's full of chill and you'll get pneumonia. His was a great sin who first invented consciousness. Let us lose it for a few hours."

So wrapping himself in his blanket he fell off to sleep.

FRAGMENT: ZEPHYRUS THE AWAKENER.

The Project Gutenberg EBook of The Complete Poetical Works of Percy Bysshe Shelley Volume II

[Published by Rossetti, "Complete Poetical Works of P. B. S.", 1870.]

Come, thou awakener of the spirit's ocean,
Zephyr, whom to thy cloud or cave
No thought can trace! speed with thy gentle motion!

Poetry from The Project Gutenberg EBook of *A Vers de Société Anthology*, by Various

SCHERZO

WHEN the down is on the chin
And the gold-gleam in the hair,
When the birds their sweethearts win
And champagne is in the air
Love is here, and Love is there,
Love is welcome everywhere.

Summer's cheek too soon turns thin,
Day grows briefer, sunshine rare;
Autumn from his cannikin
Blows the froth to chase Despair:
Love is met with frosty stare,
Cannot house 'neath branches bare.

When new life is in the leaf
And new red is in the rose,

Though Love's Maytime be as brief
As a dragon-fly's repose,
Never moments come like those,
Be they Heaven or Hell: who knows?

All too soon comes Winter's grief,
Spendthrift Love's false friends turn foes;
Softly comes Old Age, the thief,
Steals the rapture, leaves the throes:
Love his mantle round him throws, —
"Time to say good-bye; it snows."
James Russell Lowell.

MISS NANCY'S GOWN

IN days when George the Third was King
And ruled the Old Dominion,
And Law and Fashion owned the sway
Of Parliament's opinion,
A good ship brought across the sea
A treasure fair and fine, —
Miss Nancy's gown from London Town,
The latest Court design!

The plaited waist from neck to belt
Scarce measured half a span;
The sleeves, balloon-like, at the top
Could hold her feather fan;
The narrow skirt with bias gore
Revealed an ankle neat,
Whene'er she put her dainty foot
From carriage step to street!

By skilful hands this wondrous gown
Of costliest stuff was made,
Cocoons of France on Antwerp looms
Wrought to embossed brocade,
Where roses red and violets
In blooming beauty grew,
As if young May were there alway,
And June and April too!

And from this bower of delight
Miss Nancy reigned a Queen,
Nor one disloyal heart rebelled
In all her wild demesne:
The noble House of Burgesses

Forgot its fierce debate
O'er rights of Crown, when Nancy's gown
Appeared in Halls of State!

Through jocund reel, or measured tread
Of stately minuet,
Like fairy vision shone the bloom
Of rose and violet,
As, hand in hand with Washington,
The hero of the day,
The smiling face and nymph-like grace
Of Nancy led the way!

A century, since that gay time
The merry dance was trod,
Has passed, and Nancy long has slept
Beneath the churchyard sod;
Yet on the brocade velvet gown
The rose and violet
Are blooming bright as on the night
She danced the minuet!
Zitella Cocke.

The Wanderer. [Zoe Akins]

The Project Gutenberg Etext of *The Second Book of Modern Verse*
Ed. Jessie B. Rittenhouse

The ships are lying in the bay,
The gulls are swinging round their spars;
My soul as eagerly as they
Desires the margin of the stars.

So much do I love wandering,
So much I love the sea and sky,
That it will be a piteous thing
In one small grave to lie.

TO MOZART

Grace Hazard Conkling

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_What junipers are these, inlaid
With flame of the pomegranate tree?
The god of gardens must have made
This still unrumored place for thee
To rest from immortality,
And dream within the splendid shade
Some more elusive symphony
Than orchestra has ever played._

I In A major
Poco sostenuto

The laving tide of inarticulate air
Breaks here in flowers as the sea in foam,
But with no satin lisp of failing wave:
The odor-laden winds are very still.
An unimagined music here exhales
In upcurled petal, dreamy bud half-furled,
And variations of thin vivid leaf:
Symphonic beauty that some god forgot.
If form could waken into lyric sound,
This flock of irises like poising birds
Would feel song at their slender feathered throats,
And pour into a grey-winged aria
Their wrinkled silver fingermarked with pearl;
That flight of ivory roses high along
The airy azure of the larkspur spires
Would be a fugue to puzzle nightingales
With too-evasive rapture, phrase on phrase.
Where the hibiscus flares would cymbals clash,
And the black cypress like a deep bassoon
Would hum a clouded amber melody.

But all across the trudging ragged chords
That are the tangled grasses in the heat,
The mariposa lilies fluttering
Like trills upon some archangelic flute,
The roses and carnations and divine
Small violets that voice the vanished god,
There is a lure of passion-poignant tone
Not flower-of-pomegranate--that finds the heart
As stubborn oboes do--can breathe in air,

Nor poppies, nor keen lime, nor orange-bloom.

What zone of wonder in the ardent dusk
Of trees that yearn and cannot understand,
Vibrates as to the golden shepherd horn
That stirs some great adagio with its cry
And will not let it rest?

O tender trees,
Your orchid, like a shepherdess of dreams,
Calls home her whitest dream from following
Elusive laughter of the unmindful god!

Vivace

The iris people dance
Like any nimble faun:
To rhythmic radiance
They foot it in the dawn.
They dance and have no need
Of crystal-dripping flute
Or chuckling river-reed,--
Their music hovers mute.
The dawn-lights flutter by
All noiseless, but they know!
Such children of the sky
Can hear the darkness go.
But does the morning play
Whatever they demand--
Or amber-barred bourrée
Or silver saraband?

Poetry from The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Georgian Poetry 1920-22*, by Various

THE BUZZARDS

BY MARTIN ARMSTRONG

When evening came and the warm glow grew deeper
And every tree that bordered the green meadows
And in the yellow cornfields every reaper
And every corn-shock stood above their shadows
Flung eastward from their feet in longer measure,
Serenely far there swam in the sunny height
A buzzard and his mate who took their pleasure
Swirling and poisoning idly in golden light.

On great pied motionless moth-wings borne along,
So effortless and so strong,
Cutting each other's paths, together they glided,
Then wheeled asunder till they soared divided
Two valleys' width (as though it were delight
To part like this, being sure they could unite
So swiftly in their empty, free dominion),
Curved headlong downward, towered up the sunny steep,
Then, with a sudden lift of the one great pinion,
Swung proudly to a curve and from its height
Took half a mile of sunlight in one long sweep.

And we, so small on the swift immense hillside,
Stood tranced, until our souls arose uplifted
On those far-sweeping, wide,
Strong curves of flight,--swayed up and hugely drifted,
Were washed, made strong and beautiful in the tide
Of sun-bathed air. But far beneath, beholden
Through shining deeps of air, the fields were golden
And rosy burned the heather where cornfields ended.

And still those buzzards wheeled, while light withdrew
Out of the vales and to surging slopes ascended,
Till the loftiest-flaming summit died to blue.

SONG AT SANTA CRUZ

FRANCIS BRETT YOUNG

Were there lovers in the lanes of Atlantis:
Meeting lips and twining fingers
In the mild Atlantis springtime?
How should I know
If there were lovers in the lanes of Atlantis
When the dark sea drowned her mountains
Many ages ago?

Were there poets in the paths of Atlantis:
Eager poets, seeking beauty
To adorn the women they worshipped?
How can I say
If there were poets in the paths of Atlantis?
For the waters that drowned her mountains
Washed their beauty away.

Were there women in the ways of Atlantis:
Foolish women, who loved, as I do,
Dreaming that mortal love was deathless?

Ask me not now
If there were women in the ways of Atlantis:
There was no woman in all her mountains
Wonderful as thou!

THE STORY OF ZOULVISIA

The Project Gutenberg EBook of *The Olive Fairy Book*, by Various

(From *_Contes Arméniens_*. Par Frédéric Macler.)

In the midst of a sandy desert, somewhere in Asia, the eyes of travellers are refreshed by the sight of a high mountain covered with beautiful trees, among which the glitter of foaming waterfalls may be seen in the sunlight. In that clear, still air it is even possible to hear the song of the birds, and smell of the flowers; but though the mountain is plainly inhabited--for here and there a white tent is visible--none of the kings or princes who pass it on the road to Babylon or Baalbec ever plunge into its forests--or, if they do, they never come back. Indeed, so great is the terror caused by the evil reputation of the mountain that fathers, on their death-beds, pray their sons never to try to fathom its mysteries. But in spite of its ill-fame, a certain number of young men every year announce their intention of visiting it and, as we have said, are never seen again.

* * * * *

Now there was once a powerful king who ruled over a country on the other side of the desert, and, when dying, gave the usual counsel to his seven sons. Hardly, however, was he dead than the eldest, who succeeded to the throne, announced his intention of hunting in the enchanted mountain. In vain the old men shook their heads and tried to persuade him to give up his mad scheme. All was useless; he went, but did not return; and in due time the throne was filled by his next brother.

And so it happened to the other five, but when the youngest became king, and he also proclaimed a hunt in the mountain, a loud lament was raised in the city.

'Who will reign over us when you are dead? For dead you surely will be,' cried they. 'Stay with us, and we will make you happy.' And for a while he listened to their prayers, and the land grew rich and prosperous under his rule. But in a few years the restless fit again took possession of him, and this time he would hear nothing. Hunt in that forest he would, and calling his friends and attendants round

him, he set out one morning across the desert.

They were riding through a rocky valley, when a deer sprang up in front of them and bounded away. The king instantly gave chase, followed by his attendants; but the animal ran so swiftly that they never could get up to it, and at length it vanished in the depths of the forest.

Then the young man drew rein for the first time, and looked about him. He had left his companions far behind, and, glancing back, he beheld them entering some tents, dotted here and there amongst the trees. For himself, the fresh coolness of the woods was more attractive to him than any food, however delicious, and for hours he strolled about as his fancy led him.

By-and-by, however, it began to grow dark, and he thought that the moment had arrived for them to start for the palace. So, leaving the forest with a sigh, he made his way down to the tents, but what was his horror to find his men lying about, some dead, some dying. These were past speech, but speech was needless. It was as clear as day that the wine they had drunk contained deadly poison.

'I am too late to help you, my poor friends,' he said, gazing at them sadly; 'but at least I can avenge you! Those that have set the snare will certainly return to see to its working. I will hide myself somewhere, and discover who they are!'

Near the spot where he stood he noticed a large walnut tree, and into this he climbed. Night soon fell, and nothing broke the stillness of the place; but with the earliest glimpse of dawn a noise of galloping hoofs was heard.

Pushing the branches aside the young man beheld a youth approaching, mounted on a white horse. On reaching the tents the cavalier dismounted, and closely inspected the dead bodies that lay about them. Then, one by one, he dragged them to a ravine close by and threw them into a lake at the bottom. While he was doing this, the servants who had followed him led away the horses of the ill-fated men, and the courtiers were ordered to let loose the deer, which was used as a decoy, and to see that the tables in the tents were covered as before with food and wine.

Having made these arrangements he strolled slowly through the forest, but great was his surprise to come upon a beautiful horse hidden in the depths of a thicket.

'There was a horse for every dead man,' he said to himself. 'Then whose is this?'

'Mine!' answered a voice from a walnut tree close by. 'Who are you that lure men into your power and then poison them? But you shall do so no longer. Return to your house, wherever it may be, and we will fight before it!'

The cavalier remained speechless with anger at these words; then with a great effort he replied:

'I accept your challenge. Mount and follow me. I am Zoulvisia.' And, springing on his horse, he was out of sight so quickly that the king had only time to notice that light seemed to flow from himself and his steed, and that the hair under his helmet was like liquid gold.

Clearly, the cavalier was a woman. But who could she be? Was she queen of all the queens? Or was she chief of a band of robbers? She was neither: only a beautiful maiden.

[Illustration: 'I ACCEPT YOUR CHALLENGE. MOUNT AND FOLLOW ME. I AM ZOULVISIA.']

Wrapped in these reflections, he remained standing beneath the walnut tree, long after horse and rider had vanished from sight. Then he awoke with a start, to remember that he must find the way to the house of his enemy, though where it was he had no notion. However, he took the path down which the rider had come, and walked along it for many hours till he came to three huts side by side, in each of which lived an old fairy and her sons.

The poor king was by this time so tired and hungry that he could hardly speak, but when he had drunk some milk, and rested a little, he was able to reply to the questions they eagerly put to him.

'I am going to seek Zoulvisia,' said he, 'she has slain my brothers and many of my subjects, and I mean to avenge them.'

He had only spoken to the inhabitants of one house, but from all three came an answering murmur.

'What a pity we did not know! Twice this day has she passed our door, and we might have kept her prisoner.'

But though their words were brave their hearts were not, for the mere thought of Zoulvisia made them tremble.

'Forget Zoulvisia, and stay with us,' they all said, holding out their hands; 'you shall be our big brother, and we will be your little brothers.' But the king would not.

Drawing from his pocket a pair of scissors, a razor and a mirror, he

gave one to each of the old fairies, saying:

'Though I may not give up my vengeance I accept your friendship, and therefore leave you these three tokens. If blood should appear on the face of either know that my life is in danger, and, in memory of our sworn brotherhood, come to my aid.'

'We will come,' they answered. And the king mounted his horse and set out along the road they showed him.

By the light of the moon he presently perceived a splendid palace, but, though he rode twice round it, he could find no door. He was considering what he should do next, when he heard the sound of loud snoring, which seemed to come from his feet. Looking down, he beheld an old man lying at the bottom of a deep pit, just outside the walls, with a lantern by his side.

'Perhaps he may be able to give me some counsel,' thought the king; and, with some difficulty, he scrambled into the pit and laid his hand on the shoulder of the sleeper.

'Are you a bird or a snake that you can enter here?' asked the old man, awakening with a start. But the king answered that he was a mere mortal, and that he sought Zoulvisia.

'Zoulvisia? The world's curse?' replied he, gnashing his teeth. 'Out of all the thousands she has slain I am the only one who has escaped, though why she spared me only to condemn me to this living death I cannot guess.'

'Help me if you can,' said the king. And he told the old man his story, to which he listened intently.

'Take heed then to my counsel,' answered the old man. 'Know that every day at sunrise Zoulvisia dresses herself in her jacket of pearls, and mounts the steps of her crystal watch-tower. From there she can see all over her lands, and behold the entrance of either man or demon. If so much as one is detected she utters such fearful cries that those who hear her die of fright. But hide yourself in a cave that lies near the foot of the tower, and plant a forked stick in front of it; then, when she has uttered her third cry, go forth boldly, and look up at the tower. And go without fear, for you will have broken her power.'

[Illustration: THE ASCENT OF THE CRYSTAL TOWER]

Word for word the king did as the old man had bidden him, and when he stepped forth from the cave, their eyes met.

'You have conquered me,' said Zoulvisia, 'and are worthy to be my

husband, for you are the first man who has not died at the sound of my voice!' And letting down her golden hair, she drew up the king to the summit of the tower as with a rope. Then she led him into the hall of audience, and presented him to her household.

'Ask of me what you will, and I will grant it to you,' whispered Zoulvisia with a smile, as they sat together on a mossy bank by the stream. And the king prayed her to set free the old man to whom he owed his life, and to send him back to his own country.

* * * * *

'I have finished with hunting, and with riding about my lands,' said Zoulvisia, the day that they were married. 'The care of providing for us all belongs henceforth to you.' And turning to her attendants, she bade them bring the horse of fire before her.

'This is your master, O my steed of flame,' cried she; 'and you will serve him as you have served me.' And kissing him between his eyes, she placed the bridle in the hand of her husband.

The horse looked for a moment at the young man, and then bent his head, while the king patted his neck and smoothed his tail, till they felt themselves old friends. After this he mounted to do Zoulvisia's bidding, but before he started she gave him a case of pearls containing one of her hairs, which he tucked into the breast of his coat.

He rode along for some time, without seeing any game to bring home for dinner. Suddenly a fine stag started up almost under his feet, and he at once gave chase. On they sped, but the stag twisted and turned so that the king had no chance of a shot till they reached a broad river, when the animal jumped in and swam across. The king fitted his cross-bow with a bolt, and took aim, but though he succeeded in wounding the stag, it contrived to gain the opposite bank, and in his excitement he never observed that the case of pearls had fallen into the water.

* * * * *

The stream, though deep, was likewise rapid, and the box was swirled along miles, and miles, and miles, till it was washed up in quite another country. Here it was picked up by one of the water-carriers belonging to the palace, who showed it to the king. The workmanship of the case was so curious, and the pearls so rare, that the king could not make up his mind to part with it, but he gave the man a good price, and sent him away. Then, summoning his chamberlain, he bade him find out its history in three days, or lose his head.

But the answer to the riddle, which puzzled all the magicians and wise men, was given by an old woman, who came up to the palace and told the chamberlain that, for two handfuls of gold, she would reveal the mystery.

Of course the chamberlain gladly gave her what she asked, and in return she informed him that the case and the hair belonged to Zoulvisia.

'Bring her hither, old crone, and you shall have gold enough to stand up in,' said the chamberlain. And the old woman answered that she would try what she could do.

She went back to her hut in the middle of the forest, and standing in the doorway, whistled softly. Soon the dead leaves on the ground began to move and to rustle, and from underneath them there came a long train of serpents. They wriggled to the feet of the witch, who stooped down and patted their heads, and gave each one some milk in a red earthen basin. When they had all finished, she whistled again, and bade two or three coil themselves round her arms and neck, while she turned one into a cane and another into a whip. Then she took a stick, and on the river bank changed it into a raft, and seating herself comfortably, she pushed off into the centre of the stream.

All that day she floated, and all the next night, and towards sunset the following evening she found herself close to Zoulvisia's garden, just at the moment that the king, on the horse of flame, was returning from hunting.

'Who are you?' he asked in surprise; for old women travelling on rafts were not common in that country. 'Who are you, and why have you come here?'

'I am a poor pilgrim, my son,' answered she, 'and having missed the caravan, I have wandered foodless for many days through the desert, till at length I reached the river. There I found this tiny raft, and to it I committed myself, not knowing if I should live or die. But since you have found me, give me, I pray you, bread to eat, and let me lie this night by the dog who guards your door!'

This piteous tale touched the heart of the young man, and he promised that he would bring her food, and that she should pass the night in his palace.

'But mount behind me, good woman,' cried he, 'for you have walked far, and it is still a long way to the palace.' And as he spoke he bent down to help her, but the horse swerved on one side.

And so it happened twice and thrice, and the old witch guessed the

reason, though the king did not.

'I fear to fall off,' said she; 'but as your kind heart pities my sorrows, ride slowly, and lame as I am, I think I can manage to keep up.'

At the door he bade the witch to rest herself, and he would fetch her all she needed. But Zoulvisia his wife grew pale when she heard whom he had brought, and besought him to feed the old woman and send her away, as she would cause mischief to befall them.

The king laughed at her fears, and answered lightly:

'Why, one would think she was a witch to hear you talk! And even if she were, what harm could she do to us?' And calling to the maidens he bade them carry her food, and to let her sleep in their chamber.

Now the old woman was very cunning, and kept the maidens awake half the night with all kinds of strange stories. Indeed, the next morning, while they were dressing their mistress, one of them suddenly broke into a laugh, in which the others joined her.

'What is the matter with you?' asked Zoulvisia. And the maid answered that she was thinking of a droll adventure told them the evening before by the new-comer.

'And, oh, madam!' cried the girl, 'it may be that she is a witch, as they say; but I am sure she never would work a spell to harm a fly! And as for her tales, they would pass many a dull hour for you, when my lord was absent!'

So, in an evil hour, Zoulvisia consented that the crone should be brought to her, and from that moment the two were hardly ever apart.

* * * * *

One day the witch began to talk about the young king, and to declare that in all the lands she had visited she had seen none like him.

'It was so clever of him to guess your secret so as to win your heart,' said she. 'And of course he told you his, in return?'

'No, I don't think he has got any,' returned Zoulvisia.

'Not got any secrets?' cried the old woman scornfully. 'That is nonsense! Every man has a secret, which he always tells to the woman he loves. And if he has not told it to _you_, it is that he does not love you!'

[Illustration: THE WITCH AND HER SNAKES]

These words troubled Zoulvisia mightily, though she would not confess it to the witch. But the next time she found herself alone with her husband, she began to coax him to tell her in what lay the secret of his strength. For a long while he put her off with caresses, but when she would be no longer denied, he answered:

'It is my sabre that gives me strength, and day and night it lies by my side. But now that I have told you, swear upon this ring, that I will give you in exchange for yours, that you will reveal it to nobody.' And Zoulvisia swore; and instantly hastened to betray the great news to the old woman.

Four nights later, when all the world was asleep, the witch softly crept into the king's chamber and took the sabre from his side as he lay sleeping. Then, opening her lattice, she flew on to the terrace and dropped the sword into the river.

The next morning everyone was surprised because the king did not, as usual, rise early and go off to hunt. The attendants listened at the keyhole and heard the sound of heavy breathing, but none dared enter, till Zoulvisia pushed past. And what a sight met their gaze! There lay the king almost dead, with foam on his mouth, and eyes that were already closed. They wept, and they cried to him, but no answer came.

Suddenly a shriek broke from those who stood hindmost, and in strode the witch, with serpents round her neck and arms and hair. At a sign from her they flung themselves with a hiss upon the maidens, whose flesh was pierced with their poisonous fangs. Then turning to Zoulvisia, she said:

'I give you your choice--will you come with me, or shall the serpents slay you also?' And as the terrified girl stared at her, unable to utter one word, she seized her by the arm and led her to the place where the raft was hidden among the rushes. When they were both on board she took the oars, and they floated down the stream till they had reached the neighbouring country, where Zoulvisia was sold for a sack of gold to the king.

Now, since the young man had entered the three huts on his way through the forest, not a morning had passed without the sons of the three fairies examining the scissors, the razor and the mirror, which the young king had left them. Hitherto the surfaces of all three things had been bright and undimmed, but on this particular morning, when they took them out as usual, drops of blood stood on the razor and the scissors, while the little mirror was clouded over.

'Something terrible must have happened to our little brother,' they

whispered to each other, with awestruck faces; 'we must hasten to his rescue ere it be too late.' And putting on their magic slippers they started for the palace.

The servants greeted them eagerly, ready to pour forth all they knew, but that was not much; only that the sabre had vanished, none knew where. The new-comers passed the whole of the day in searching for it, but it could not be found, and when night closed in, they were very tired and hungry. But how were they to get food? The king had not hunted that day, and there was nothing for them to eat. The little men were in despair, when a ray of the moon suddenly lit up the river beneath the walls.

'How stupid! Of course there are fish to catch,' cried they; and running down to the bank they soon succeeded in landing some fine fish, which they cooked on the spot. Then they felt better, and began to look about them.

Further out, in the middle of the stream, there was a strange splashing, and by-and-by the body of a huge fish appeared, turning and twisting as if in pain. The eyes of all the brothers were fixed on the spot, when the fish leapt in the air, and a bright gleam flashed through the night. 'The sabre!' they shouted, and plunged into the stream, and with a sharp tug, pulled out the sword, while the fish lay on the water, exhausted by its struggles. Swimming back with the sabre to land, they carefully dried it in their coats, and then carried it to the palace and placed it on the king's pillow. In an instant colour came back to the waxen face, and the hollow cheeks filled out. The king sat up, and opening his eyes he said:

'Where is Zoulvisia?'

'That is what we do not know,' answered the little men; 'but now that you are saved you will soon find out.' And they told him what had happened since Zoulvisia had betrayed his secret to the witch.

'Let me go to my horse,' was all he said. But when he entered the stable he could have wept at the sight of his favourite steed, which was nearly in as sad a plight as his master had been. Languidly he turned his head as the door swung back on its hinges, but when he beheld the king he rose up, and rubbed his head against him.

'Oh, my poor horse! How much cleverer were you than I! If I had acted like you I should never have lost Zoulvisia; but we will seek her together, you and I.'

* * * * *

For a long while the king and his horse followed the course of the

stream, but nowhere could he learn anything of Zoulvisia. At length, one evening, they both stopped to rest by a cottage not far from a great city, and as the king was lying outstretched on the grass, lazily watching his horse cropping the short turf, an old woman came out with a wooden bowl of fresh milk, which she offered him.

He drank it eagerly, for he was very thirsty, and then laying down the bowl, began to talk to the woman, who was delighted to have someone to listen to her conversation.

'You are in luck to have passed this way just now,' said she, 'for in five days the king holds his wedding banquet. Ah! but the bride is unwilling, for all her blue eyes and her golden hair! And she keeps by her side a cup of poison, and declares that she will swallow it rather than become his wife. Yet he is a handsome man too, and a proper husband for her--more than she could have looked for, having come no one knows whither, and bought from a witch----'

The king started. Had he found her after all? His heart beat violently, as if it would choke him; but he gasped out:

'Is her name Zoulvisia?'

'Ay, so she says, though the old witch---- But what ails you?' she broke off, as the young man sprang to his feet and seized her wrists.

'Listen to me,' he said. 'Can you keep a secret?'

'Ay,' answered the old woman again, 'if I am paid for it.'

'Oh, you shall be paid, never fear--as much as your heart can desire! Here is a handful of gold: you shall have as much again if you will do my bidding.' The old crone nodded her head.

'Then go and buy a dress such as ladies wear at court, and manage to get admitted into the palace, and into the presence of Zoulvisia. When there, show her this ring, and after that she will tell you what to do.'

So the old woman set off, and clothed herself in a garment of yellow silk, and wrapped a veil closely round her head. In this dress she walked boldly up the palace steps behind some merchants whom the king had sent for to bring presents for Zoulvisia.

At first the bride would have nothing to say to any of them; but on perceiving the ring, she suddenly grew as meek as a lamb. And thanking the merchants for their trouble, she sent them away, and remained alone with her visitor.

'Grandmother,' asked Zoulvisia, as soon as the door was safely shut, 'where is the owner of this ring?'

'In my cottage,' answered the old woman, 'waiting for orders from you.'

'Tell him to remain there for three days; and now go to the king of this country, and say that you have succeeded in bringing me to reason. Then he will let me alone and will cease to watch me. On the third day from this I shall be wandering about the garden near the river, and there your guest will find me. The rest concerns myself only.'

* * * * *

The morning of the third day dawned, and with the first rays of the sun a bustle began in the palace; for that evening the king was to marry Zoulvisia. Tents were being erected of fine scarlet cloth, decked with wreaths of sweet-smelling white flowers, and in them the banquet was spread. When all was ready a procession was formed to fetch the bride, who had been wandering in the palace gardens since daylight, and crowds lined the way to see her pass. A glimpse of her dress of golden gauze might be caught, as she passed from one flowery thicket to another; then suddenly the multitude swayed, and shrank back, as a thunderbolt seemed to flash out of the sky to the place where Zoulvisia was standing. Ah! but it was no thunderbolt, only the horse of fire! And when the people looked again, it was bounding away with two persons on its back.

* * * * *

Zoulvisia and her husband both learnt how to keep happiness when they had got it; and _that_ is a lesson that many men and woman never learn at all. And besides, it is a lesson which nobody can teach, and that every boy and girl must learn for themselves.

THE GALAH, AND OOLAH THE LIZARD

Project Gutenberg's *Australian Legendary Tales*, by K. Langloh Parker

Oolah the lizard was tired of lying in the sun, doing nothing. So he said, "I will go and play." He took his boomerangs out, and began to practise throwing them. While he was doing so a Galah came up, and stood near, watching the boomerangs come flying back, for the kind of boomerangs Oolah was throwing were the bubberahs. They are smaller than others, and more curved, and when they are properly thrown they return to the thrower, which other boomerangs do not.

Oolah was proud of having the gay Galah to watch his skill. In his pride he gave the bubberah an extra twist, and threw it with all his might. Whizz, whizzing through the air, back it came, hitting, as it passed her, the Galah on the top of her head, taking both feathers and skin clean off. The Galah set up a hideous, cawing, croaking shriek, and flew about, stopping every few minutes to knock her head on the ground like a mad bird. Oolah was so frightened when he saw what he had done, and noticed that the blood was flowing from the Galah's head, that he glided away to hide under a bindeah bush. But the Galah saw him. She never stopped the hideous noise she was making for a minute, but, still shrieking, followed Oolah. When she reached the bindeah bush she rushed at Oolah, seized him with her beak, rolled him on the bush until every bindeah had made a hole in his skin. Then she rubbed his skin with her own bleeding head. "Now then," she said, "you Oolah shall carry bindeahs on you always, and the stain of my blood."

"And you," said Oolah, as he hissed with pain from the tingling of the prickles, "shall be a bald-headed bird as long as I am a red prickly lizard."

So to this day, underneath the Galah's crest you can always find the bald patch which the bubberah of Oolah first made. And in the country of the Galahs are lizards coloured reddish brown, and covered with spikes like bindeah prickles.

TWO from The Project Gutenberg EBook of *Myths And Legends Of Our Own Land, Complete*
by Charles M. Skinner

THE VANDERDECKEN OF TAPPAN ZEE

It is Saturday night; the swell of the Hudson lazily heaves against the shores of Tappan Zee, the cliff above Tarrytown where the white lady cries on winter nights is pale in starlight, and crickets chirp in the boskage. It is so still that the lap of oars can be heard coming across the water at least a mile away. Some small boat, evidently, but of heavy build, for it takes a vigorous hand to propel it, and now there is a grinding of oars on thole-pins. Strange that it is not yet seen, for the sound is near. Look! Is that a shadow crossing that wrinkle of starlight in the water? The oars have stopped, and there is no wind to make that sound of a sigh.

Ho, Rambout Van Dam! Is it you? Are you still expiating your oath to pull from Kakiat to Spuyten Duyvil before the dawn of Sabbath, if it takes you a month of Sundays? Better for you had you passed the night with your roistering friends at Kakiat, or started homeward earlier, for Sabbath-breaking is no sin now, and you, poor ghost, will find little sympathy for your plight. Grant that your month of Sundays, or your cycle of months of Sundays, be soon up, for it is sad to be reminded that we may be punished for offences many years forgotten. When the sun is high to-morrow a score of barges will vex the sea of Tappan, each crowded with men and maids from New Amsterdam, jigging to profane

music and refreshing themselves with such liquors as you, Rambout, never even smelled — be thankful for that much. If your shade sits blinking at them from the wooded buttresses of the Palisades, you must repine, indeed, at the hardness of your fate.

THE DEFORMED OF ZOAR

The valley of Zoar, in western New York, is so surrounded by hills that its discoverers — a religious people, who gave it a name from Scripture said, "This is Zoar; it is impregnable. From her we will never go." And truly, for lack of roads, they found it so hard to get out, having got in, that they did not leave it. Among the early settlers here were people of a family named Wright, whose house became a sort of inn for the infrequent traveller, inasmuch as they were not troubled with piety, and had no scruples against the selling of drink and the playing of cards at late hours. A peddler passed through the valley on his way to Buffalo and stopped at the Wright house for a lodging, but before he went to bed he incautiously showed a number of golden trinkets from his pack and drew a considerable quantity of money out of his pocket when he paid the fee for his lodging. Hardly had he fallen asleep before his greedy hosts were in the room, searching for his money. Their lack of caution caused him to awake, and as he found them rifling his pockets and his pack he sprang up and showed fight.

A blow sent him to the bottom of the stairs, where his attempt to escape was intercepted, and the family closed around him and bound his arms and legs. They showed him the money they had taken and asked where he had concealed the rest. He vowed that it was all he had. They insisted that he had more, and seizing a knife from the table the elder Wright slashed off one of his toes "to make him confess." No result came from this, and six toes were cut off, — three from each foot; then, in disgust, the unhappy peddler was knocked on the head and flung through a trap-door into a shallow cellar. Presently he arose and tried to draw himself out, but with hatchet and knife they chopped away his fingers and he fell back. Even the women shared in this work, and leaned forward to gaze into the cellar to see if he might yet be dead. While listening, they heard the man invoke the curse of heaven on them: he asked that they should wear the mark of crime even to the fourth generation, by coming into the world deformed and mutilated as he was then. And it was so. The next child born in that house had round, hoof-like feet, with only two toes, and hands that tapered from the wrist into a single long finger. And in time there were twenty people so deformed in the valley: The "crab-clawed Zoarites" they were called.
